

Walking Together in the Word

Devotions on the Weekly Scripture Readings for June 2026

The purpose of the Chapel Devotion Project is to encourage individuals and families to make prayer and devotional time in God's Word a regular part of their daily lives. We believe many good things will come from your intentional study and reflection of God's Word:

- Your relationship with God and with others will grow and be strengthened.
- Study of the Scripture and hymns for the upcoming weekend will enhance your worship.
- You will come to the Lord daily in prayer, bringing your praise, thanks, and requests to Him.

How to Use These Devotions

Each week contains five pages of devotional material. How you choose to use the material is up to you. You could study one reading or one page a day. You might read several portions every other day. You may use the short order of worship provided below. Use the material in the way that best fits you and your family.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
All: Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

DEVOTION and REFLECTION

PRAYERS and THE LORD'S PRAYER

LUTHER'S MORNING PRAYER

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.

or

LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER

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.

Leader: The almighty and merciful God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless us
and keep us.
All: Amen.

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Devotions and supporting material written by Pastor Ted Laesch and Mary Laesch.

Walking Together in the Word

June 1–June 6, 2026

This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, June 7.

Proper 5

The Gospel: Matthew 9:9–13

The Calling of Matthew

9 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him.

10 While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew's house, many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with him and his disciples. 11 When the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

12 On hearing this, Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 13 But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

Devotion on the Gospel

Matthew was a loathed tax collector—a cheat, a scoundrel, a sell-out, a sinner above all sinners. No way that Jesus would bother with Matthew. And yet, Jesus stops at his tax collector booth, calls Matthew to follow Him, to step out of the darkness of his sin into the light of Christ. And somehow, somehow, in His infinite power, Jesus changed Matthew's heart and he became a disciple of Christ.

Matthew, as a newly converted disciple of Jesus, did what seemed natural to him—he invited all of his tax-collecting buddies to dinner to meet Jesus! Matthew might have turned away from his sin, but he didn't turn his back on sinners. He stepped out with the light of Christ and he built bridges of love and friendship to lost people around him, so that others might step into the light of Christ too.

And Jesus sits down and He eats with those "sinners" (as the Pharisees snidely called them). He gathers around with that group of social outcasts and shares with them the saving message of the Good News. Why? Because He didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners.

Somehow, somehow, in His infinite power, Jesus has changed our heart too to make us disciples. Jesus has reached out to you and to me so that we would step out of darkness, into the light of Christ. And He has called us to reach out to others as Matthew did. We are called to step out with the light of Christ and build bridges of love and friendship to lost people all around us, so more and more might step by faith into the light of Christ.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

What was most important to the Pharisees? What important truth about God did they miss?

Jesus has "called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). Is there someone you know who is living in darkness? Pray for him or her this week, asking God to bring this person to faith and into the light of life.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Jesus quoted verse 6 of this passage when He told the Pharisees, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." What does this phrase mean?

What promises of God did Abraham believe by faith? What promises of God do we believe by faith?

*Verse to Remember:
Romans 4:24*

The Old Testament Reading: Hosea 5:15–6:6

5:15 Then I will return to my lair until they have borne their guilt and seek my face—in their misery they will earnestly seek me."

Israel Unrepentant

6 "Come, let us return to the Lord. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds.

2 After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence. 3 Let us acknowledge the Lord; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth."

4 "What can I do with you, Ephraim? What can I do with you, Judah? Your love is like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears. 5 Therefore I cut you in pieces with my prophets, I killed you with the words of my mouth— then my judgments go forth like the sun. 6 For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.

The Epistle: Romans 4:13–25

13 It was not through the law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. 14 For if those who depend on the law are heirs, faith means nothing and the promise is worthless, 15 because the law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

16 Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who have the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. 17 As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being things that were not.

18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be."

19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. 20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. 22 This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness." 23 The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, 24 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. 25 He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.

The Psalm: Psalm 119:65-72

Do good to your servant
according to your word, Lord.
66 Teach me knowledge and good judgment,
for I trust your commands.
67 Before I was afflicted I went astray,
but now I obey your word.
68 You are good, and what you do is good;
teach me your decrees.
69 Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies,
I keep your precepts with all my heart.
70 Their hearts are callous and unfeeling,
but I delight in your law.
71 It was good for me to be afflicted
so that I might learn your decrees.
72 The law from your mouth is more precious to me
than thousands of pieces of silver and gold.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Why is God's Law so precious to the psalmist? Why is it precious to us as well?



Notes,
Thoughts,
Questions

*Meditate on the
words of this hymn.
What comfort does it
give to you?*

The Hymn: Jesus Sinners Doth Receive

LSB 609

1 Jesus sinners doth receive;
Oh, may all this saying ponder
Who in sin's delusions live
And from God and heaven wander!
Here is hope for all who grieve:
Jesus sinners doth receive.

2 We deserve but grief and shame,
Yet His words, rich grace revealing,
Pardon, peace, and life proclaim;
Here our ills have perfect healing.
Firmly in these words believe:
Jesus sinners doth receive.

4 I, a sinner, come to Thee
With a penitent confession.
Savior, mercy show to me;
Grant for all my sins remission.
Let these words my soul relieve:
Jesus sinners doth receive.

6 Now my conscience is at peace;
From the Law I stand acquitted.
Christ hath purchased my release
And my ev'ry sin remitted.
Naught remains my soul to grieve:
Jesus sinners doth receive.

7 Jesus sinners doth receive;
Also I have been forgiven;
And when I this earth must leave,
I shall find an open heaven.
Dying, still to Him I cleave:
Jesus sinners doth receive.

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Faith + Life Connections

No one liked Matthew the tax collector. People stayed away from him and called him a “sinner.” But Jesus was different. Jesus said, “Come, follow Me!” and Matthew’s life changed. He became a believer and told others about Jesus. Jesus has called you too! Can you think of someone who needs to hear about Jesus’ love? *Matthew 9:9–13*

Abraham and Sarah were *old* when God promised they would have a son. God gave them faith to believe. Years later, baby Isaac was born! God promised to send a Savior for all people. Years later, Jesus was born! God keeps His promises and gives us faith to believe them. Name some other promises God has made and kept. *Romans 4:13–25*

Why did God give us rules (the Law)? Because He knows what is best for us. He forgives us for Jesus’ sake when we disobey and helps us try to do what is right. What is one of God’s rules? Why is it good? *Psalms 119:65–72*

Verse to Remember
“God will credit righteousness for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.” *Romans 4:24*

Righteousness
to us
who
believe
IN
Him
who
raised from
the dead
Jesus
our
Lord

ROMANS
4:24

Kleinmaid



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Prayer for the Week

Almighty and most merciful God, You sent Your Son, Jesus Christ, to seek and to save the lost. Graciously open our ears and our hearts to hear His call and to follow Him by faith that we may feast with Him forever in His kingdom; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Walking Together in the Word

June 8–June 13, 2026

This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, June 14.

Proper 6

The Gospel: Matthew 9:35–10:8

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

10 Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

2 These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. 7 As you go, proclaim this message: ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’ 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

Devotion on the Gospel

Ever been lost? I have. More than one time, for sure. But one time in particular is seared into my memory. I was just a kid, 9 or 10 years old, with my family at the zoo. I paused to check out the monkeys in an outdoor enclosure, turned back around, and I was alone. Parents nowhere in sight. Sisters gone. I was immediately lost. Waves of fear, anxiety, and helplessness washed over me. And when a zoo worker finally reunited me with my family, oh, the elation, the relief, the joy.

Ever been lost? It’s not a good feeling. Jesus saw the lost people. They were, as Matthew describes them, “harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” In other words . . . lost. Jesus saw those lost people. He did not pass on by. He did not ignore them. Scripture says that He had compassion on them. His heart broke for them. Because they were lost.

Ever been lost? Not lost in a zoo or lost while driving somewhere, but lost in the way those people were—harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Lost spiritually. Jesus’ heart breaks for people like that. Jesus has compassion on people like that. He sends “workers into His harvest field” for people like that—to share the Good News of the Good Shepherd: There is One who seeks. There is One who finds. There is One who has compassion. There is One who loves. There is One who gathers His lost children so that we are no longer harassed and helpless, no longer afraid and anxious, but found. Oh, the elation, the relief, the joy!

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Why did Jesus
feel compassion
for the crowds?
What did He do?*

*“I once was lost,
but now am
found, was blind
but now I see.”
The hymn
“Amazing Grace”
speaks about
being lost and
found by the
Savior. Listen to
this hymn or hum
the tune, and
thank the Good
Shepherd for
finding you.*

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

What covenant did God make with the Israelites? Israel did not keep their part of the covenant. What did God do for His part? See the Gospel reading: Matthew 10:6.

*Verse to Remember:
Romans 5:8*

The Old Testament Reading: Exodus 19:2-8

After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

3 Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, "This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: 4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. 5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites."

7 So Moses went back and summoned the elders of the people and set before them all the words the Lord had commanded him to speak. 8 The people all responded together, "We will do everything the Lord has said." So Moses brought their answer back to the Lord.

The Epistle: Romans 5:6-15

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! 10 For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! 11 Not only is this so, but we also boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

12 Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned— 13 To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. 14 Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!

The Psalm: Psalm 100

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

2 Worship the Lord with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.

3 Know that the Lord is God.

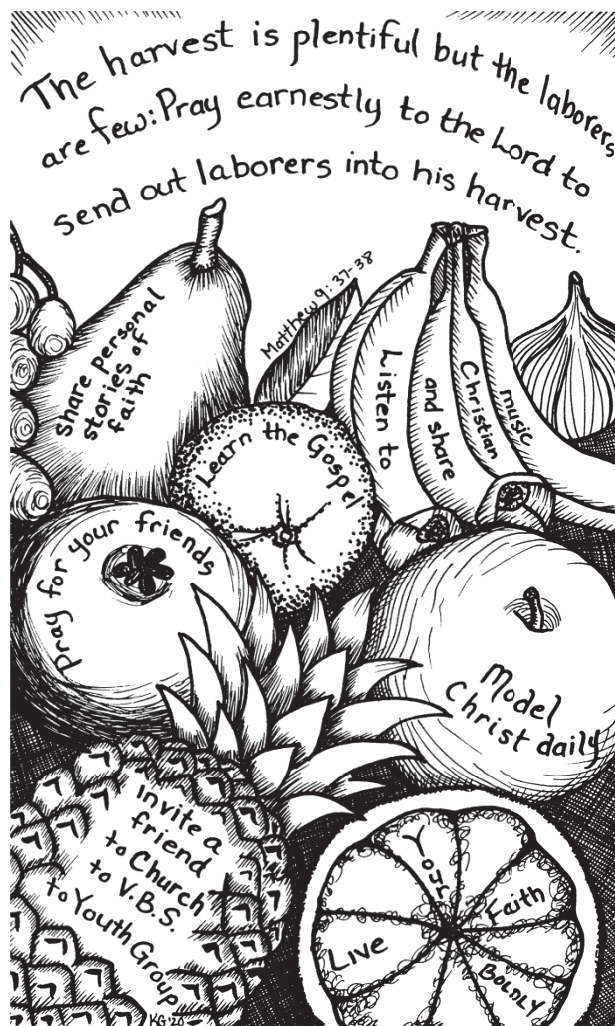
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.

5 For the Lord is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

What reasons do you have for giving thanks and praise to God?



Notes,
Thoughts,
Questions

This hymn points out many ways to share the love of Jesus. What can you do?

The Hymn: Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying

LSB 826

Hark! the voice of Jesus crying,
"Who will go and work today?
Fields are white, and harvests waiting;
Who will bear the sheaves away?"
Loud and long the Master calleth,
Rich reward he offers thee;
Who will answer, gladly saying,
"Here am I; send me, send me."

If you cannot speak like angels,
If you cannot preach like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus,
You can say He died for all,
If you cannot rouse the wicked
With the judgement's dread alarms,
You can lead the little children
To the Savior's waiting arms.

If you cannot be a watchman,
Standing high on Zion's wall,
Pointing out the path to heaven,
Off'ring life and peace to all,
With your prayers and with your bounties
You can do what God commands;
You can be like faithful Aaron,
Holding up the prophet's hands.

Let none hear you idly saying,
"There is nothing I can do,"
While the multitudes are dying,
And the Master calls for you:
Take the task he gives you gladly,
Let his work your pleasure be;
Answer quickly when he calleth,
"Here am I; send me, send me."

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"Here
am I;
send
me,
send
me."

Faith + Life Connections

Have you ever picked apples from an orchard? Imagine having to pick all the apples in the orchard by yourself! Jesus told His disciples that the “harvest” of people was ready—and many workers were needed to gather them in by sharing the Gospel with them. Who can you tell about Jesus this week?

Matthew 9:35-10:8

What would you do for a friend who needed help? What would you do for an enemy? Our sinfulness made us enemies of God, but Jesus still went to the cross to die for our sins. What great love God has for you and me!

Romans 5:6-15

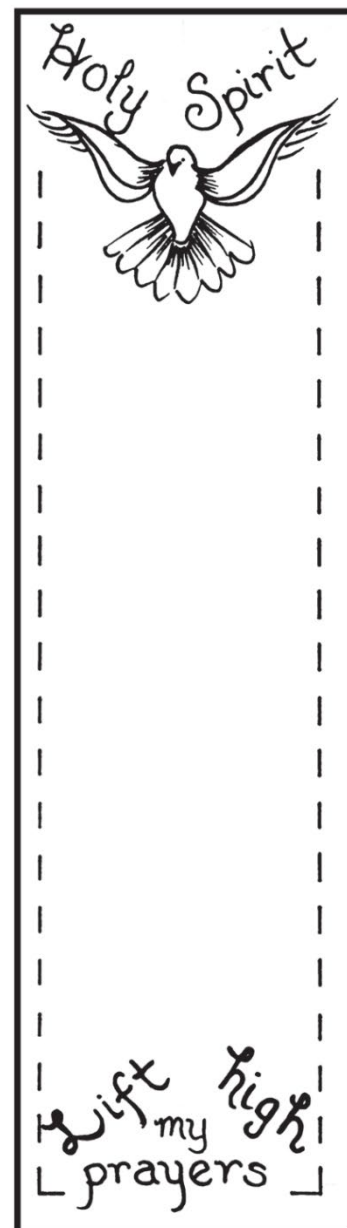
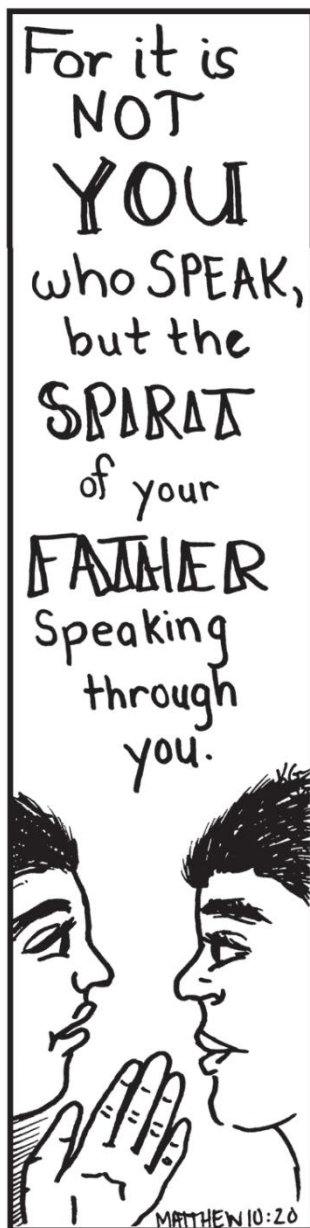
Psalms 100 is a psalm for giving thanks. Read the psalm again. What are some of the reasons the psalmist gives for giving thanks? Make a list of the things you are thankful for, and keep adding to it all week.

Psalms 100

Verse to Remember

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 5:8



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Prayer for the Week

Almighty, eternal God, in the Word of Your apostles and prophets You have proclaimed to us Your saving will. Grant us faith to believe Your promises that we may receive eternal salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Walking Together in the Word

June 15–20, 2026

This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, June 21.

The Gospel: Matthew 10:5a, 21–33

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.

“Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 22 You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. 23 When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

24 “The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

26 “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

32 “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

Devotion on the Gospel

Jesus is sending out the 12 disciples and giving them some final instructions before they go. This is a most pivotal time in their lives and in their ministry. They are being sent out to share the Gospel, to find the lost, to be fishers of men.

So, Jesus says, before you go, I have to warn you: You are going out like sheep among wolves. You’ll be handed over to the local councils. You will be flogged in the synagogues. You are going to face persecution. In fact, everyone is going to hate you because of Me.

Gee, thanks for the pep talk, Jesus!

But Jesus isn’t done. Don’t be afraid, He says. If I care for and watch over the little sparrows of the air which are sold for just a half a penny each, won’t I also care for and watch over you—the crown of my creation? Won’t I care for and watch over you who are worth so much more to Me than many sparrows?

Of course He will! And He does!

Those words aren’t only for those 12 disciples about to share their faith with others. Those words are for disciples of every time and place. Those words are for you and me as He calls us to share our faith with others. Do not be afraid! I will care for and watch over you too! After all, aren’t you worth more than many sparrows?

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Jesus warned His disciples about the dangers and difficulties they would face as they went out to share the Gospel. They still went! Why do you think they did?

When have you felt afraid to share your faith? How do Jesus’ words encourage you?

The Epistle: Romans 6:12-23

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

13 Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness. 14 For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! 16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey—whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? 17 But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. 18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.

19 I am using an example from everyday life because of your human limitations. Just as you used to offer yourselves as slaves to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer yourselves as slaves to righteousness leading to holiness. 20 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. 21 What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! 22 But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Psalm: Psalm 91:1-10

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."

3 Surely he will save you
from the fowler's snare
and from the deadly pestilence.

4 He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

5 You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,

6 nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.

8 You will only observe with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.

9 If you say, "The Lord is my refuge,"
and you make the Most High your dwelling,

10 no harm will overtake you,
no disaster will come near your tent.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

We may be tempted to keep sinning because we know that Jesus paid for our sins. What is Paul's response to this type of erroneous thinking?

*Verse to Remember:
Romans 6:23*

God is our shelter, shadow, refuge, and fortress. Pick one of these metaphors. How does it describe how God cares for you?

Notes,
Thoughts,
Questions

This hymn was originally written in German as a plea to God for peace in the church during the Thirty Years' War, which was spurred by a conflict between Catholics and Protestants. We continue to pray for peace—peace in our hearts, peace in the church, peace in our world.

The Hymn: Lord of Our Life *LSB* 659

Lord of our life and God of our salvation,
Star of our night and Hope of ev'ry nation:
Hear and receive Your Church's supplication,
Lord God Almighty.

See round Your ark the hungry billows curling;
See how Your foes their banners are unfurling
And with great spite their fiery darts are hurling,
O Lord, preserve us.

Lord, be our light when worldly darkness veils us;
Lord, be our shield when earthly armor fails us;
And in the day when hell itself assails us,
Grant us Your peace, Lord:

Peace in our hearts, where sinful thoughts are raging,
Peace in Your Church, our troubled souls assuaging,
Peace when the world its endless war is waging,
Peace in Your heaven.

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*Grant us
Your peace,
Lord*

Faith + Life Connections

Do a little bird-watching today. Do you see how God cares for the birds, giving them food, water, shelter, and materials to build their nests? If God cares for the birds, do you think He will care for you? Yes! God also gives you courage to go and tell others about Him. He is with you!

Matthew 10:5a, 21-33

Do you like to be told what to do? Sometimes, it depends on who's telling you to do it! Without God in our lives, sin rules over us, telling us what to do. But when Jesus lives in our hearts, sin can't control us anymore. Instead, we serve our loving God, who helps us do what is good and right.

Romans 6:12-23

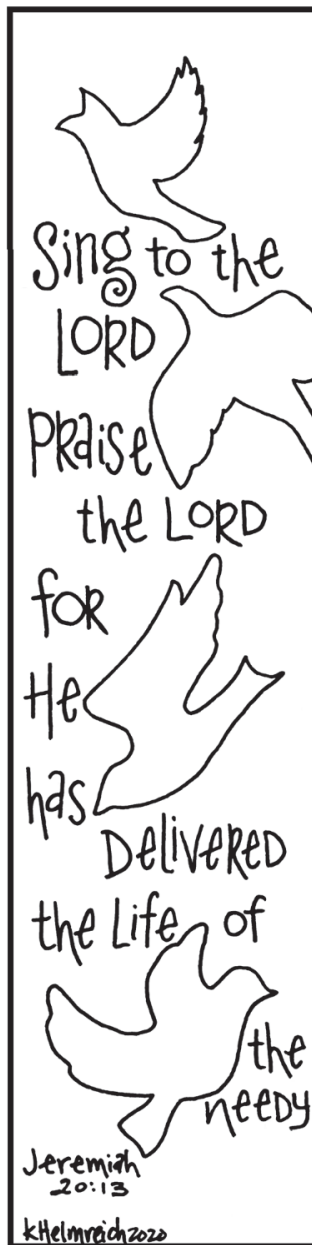
A mother bird protects her young by covering them with her wings. Look online and find a picture of this. Who protects you? The psalmist says God will "cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge."

Psalms 91:1-10

Verse to Remember

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 6:23



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Prayer for the Week

O God, because Your abiding presence always goes with us, keep us aware of Your daily mercies that we may live secure and content in Your eternal love; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Walking Together in the Word

June 22–June 27, 2026

This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, June 28.

Proper 8

The Gospel: Matthew 10:34–42

“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn

“a man against his father,

a daughter against her mother,

a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—

36 a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’

37 “Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

40 “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. 41 Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward. 42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.”

Devotion on the Gospel

You’re a loser. Hey, don’t get mad at me! That’s what Jesus says. You’re a loser. Did you catch that in the text? “Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” Jesus calls you to be a loser.

You’re not the only one. When Jesus called His disciples, He called them to be losers too. He called them to intentionally lose stuff for Him. Remember when Jesus called James and John? Jesus came to them and said, “Follow me.” And they left their nets, their fishing business, their father even, and followed Him. They were called to lose their job to follow Jesus.

There were others called to be losers. Matthew lost his tax table and all that money. The blind man in Mark 10 lost his cloak—the cloak that gathered the coins he received while begging. The woman at the well in John 4 lost her water jar because Jesus had given her spiritual, living water.

And it’s true for us too. When Jesus calls us to follow Him, He calls us to lose all that hinders our relationship with Him. And when we lose those things, we find great joy. We lose our life for Him—and He gives us new life.

St. Paul puts it this way in 2 Corinthians 5: “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” In Christ, the old life has been lost! The new life—new life in Christ—has been found. And that gives us great joy!

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Verse to Remember:
Matthew 10:39*

*What might you
lose by being a
Christ-follower?
What will you gain?*

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Hananiah was a false prophet who made the Israelites believe in a lie, leading them to defy God's will. Both Hananiah and the Israelites suffered for this. How does false teaching hurt God's people?

How does knowing God's commandments, His Law, help you recognize sinful behavior? Give an example.

The Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 28:5-9

Then the prophet Jeremiah replied to the prophet Hananiah before the priests and all the people who were standing in the house of the Lord. 6 He said, "Amen! May the Lord do so! May the Lord fulfill the words you have prophesied by bringing the articles of the Lord's house and all the exiles back to this place from Babylon. 7 Nevertheless, listen to what I have to say in your hearing and in the hearing of all the people: 8 From early times the prophets who preceded you and me have prophesied war, disaster and plague against many countries and great kingdoms. 9 But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the Lord only if his prediction comes true."

The Second Reading: Romans 7:1-13

Do you not know, brothers and sisters—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law has authority over someone only as long as that person lives? 2 For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law that binds her to him. 3 So then, if she has sexual relations with another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress if she marries another man.

4 So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. 5 For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. 6 But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." 8 But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead. 9 Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. 10 I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. 11 For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. 12 So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

13 Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

The Psalm: Psalm 119:153-160

Look on my suffering and deliver me,
for I have not forgotten your law.

154 Defend my cause and redeem me;
preserve my life according to your promise.

155 Salvation is far from the wicked,
for they do not seek out your decrees.

156 Your compassion, Lord, is great;
preserve my life according to your laws.

157 Many are the foes who persecute me,
but I have not turned from your statutes.

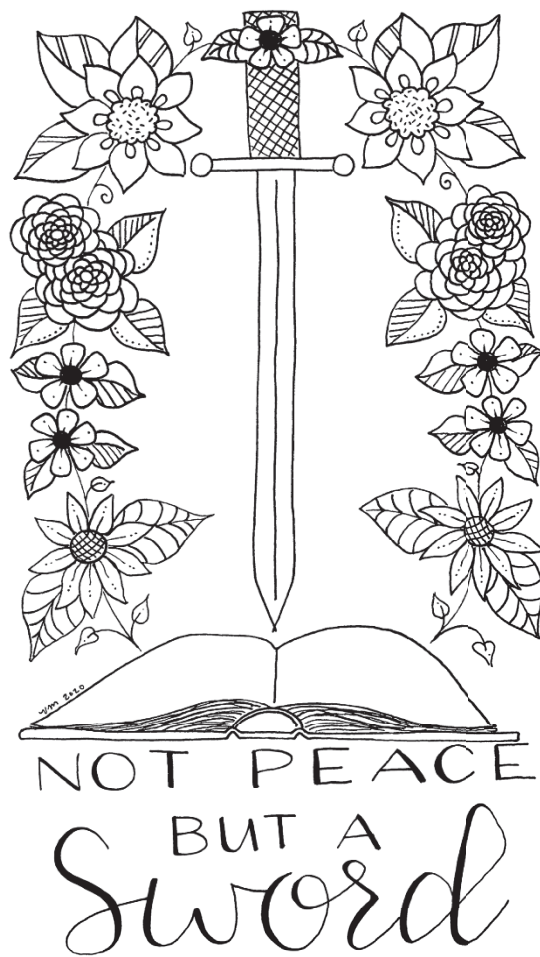
158 I look on the faithless with loathing,
for they do not obey your word.

159 See how I love your precepts;
preserve my life, Lord, in accordance with your love.

160 All your words are true;
all your righteous laws are eternal.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Compare the
faithless with the
faithful. What do the
faithless do? What
does God do for the
faithful?*



Notes,
Thoughts,
Questions

*What does the Savior
do for those He calls?*

The Hymn: “Come, Follow Me,” the Savior Spake *LSB* 688

“Come, follow Me,” the Savior spake,
“All in My way abiding;
Deny yourselves, the world forsake,
Obey My call and guiding.
O bear the cross, whate’er betide,
Take My example for your guide.

“I am the light, I light the way,
A godly life displaying;
I bid you walk as in the day;
I keep your feet from straying.
I am the way, and well I show
How you must sojourn here below.

“My heart abounds in lowliness,
My soul with love is glowing;
And gracious words My lips express,
With meekness overflowing.
My heart, My mind, My strength, My all,
To God I yield, on Him I call.

“I teach you how to shun and flee
What harms your soul’s salvation,
Your heart from ev’ry guile to free,
From sin and its temptation.
I am the refuge of the soul
And lead you to your heav’nly goal.”

Then let us follow Christ, our Lord,
And take the cross appointed
And, firmly clinging to His Word,
In suff’ring be undaunted.
For those who bear the battle’s strain
The crown of heav’nly life obtain.

Public domain

“Come
Follow
Me”
the
Savior
spake

Faith + Life Connections

Who do you love? Mom, Dad, grandparents, siblings, friends? Who do you love most? God wants you to love Him more than anyone or anything. Why? He is your Creator, your Father, your Savior, and your Friend.

Matthew 10:34-42

Do you have rules at your house? Name one. Why do you think your family has that rule? God gave us rules to follow, the Ten Commandments, so that we know what is right and what is wrong. God's rules help us live better lives. They also help us know when we mess up—and remind us that we need Jesus to be our Savior.

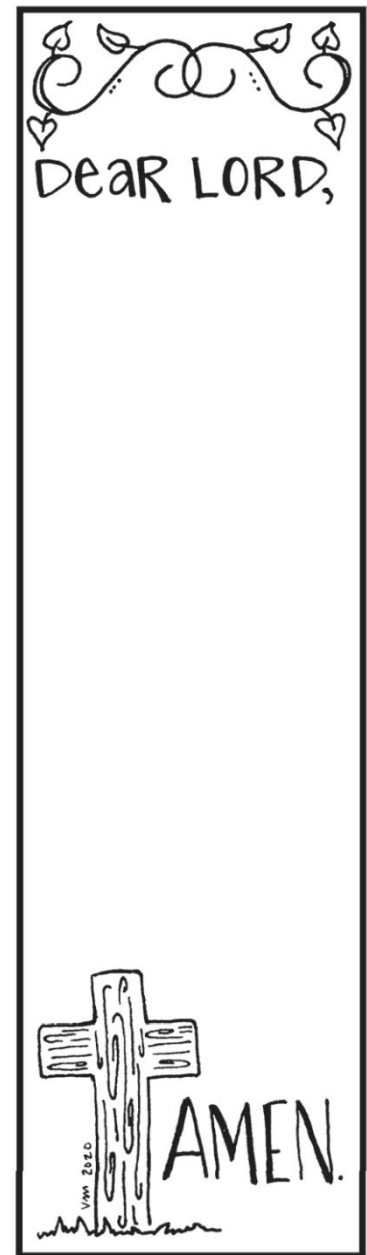
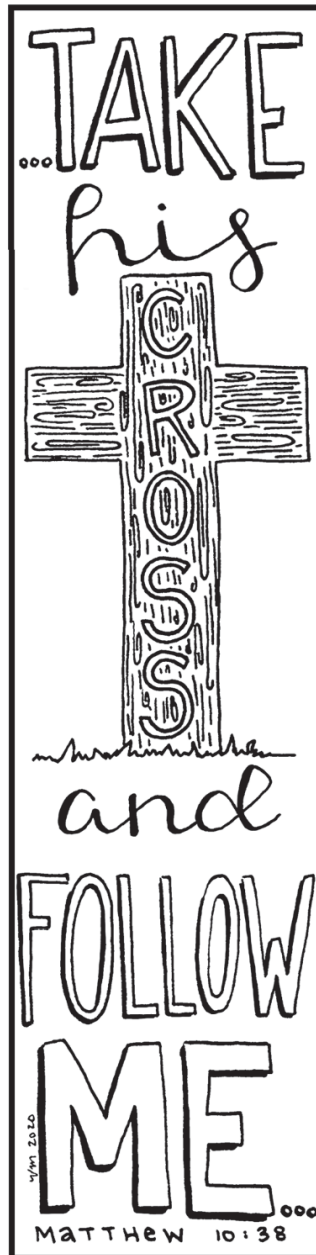
Romans 7:1-13

Jesus calls to you, "Come, follow Me." Talk about what it means to follow Jesus. How is your life different when you follow Him? How does Jesus help you to "take up your cross and follow"?

The Hymn

Verse to Remember
"Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it."

Matthew 10:39



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Prayer for the Week

Almighty God, by the working of Your Holy Spirit, grant that we may gladly hear Your Word proclaimed among us and follow its directing; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

