Walking Together in the Word

Devotions on the Weekly Scripture Readings for October 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

September 28–October 3, 2026

This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, October 4.
Proper 22

The Gospel: Matthew 21:33-46

33 "Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. 34 When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.
35 "The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. 36 Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. 37 Last of all, he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said.
38 "But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance.' 39 So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?" 41 "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end," they replied, "and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time." 42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: "'The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes'? 43 "Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit. 44 Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; anyone on whom it falls will be crushed." 45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them. 46 They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd because the people held that he was a prophet.

Devotion on the Gospel

I wonder, how are God's tenants doing today? We read how the "tenants" acted in Jesus' day. God loved them, cared for them, sent them prophets. But they didn't listen to the owner. They killed the prophets. And then the owner sent His Son, His only Son. And did they listen to and honor Him? No. They didn't want to love. They didn't want to serve. They didn't want to obey. And so they killed Him too. They killed the only Son of the Father.

So how are God's tenants doing today? How are you and I as God's tenants? Oh, we live in one of the best "vineyards" in the world, don't we? It's a beautiful vineyard. One that includes love and forgiveness and grace and mercy. All gifts from the Father through the Son. And He calls us, His tenants, to love and to serve and to obey as we live in His vineyard. When our God comes to us in the words of Scripture, and when He comes through His messengers, when He comes to you and me, His tenants, what is our reaction? Does He get rejected? Rebuffed? Ignored?

Listen to the Father! He says: I will send them my Son—my own dear Son. What amazing grace! I will send my Son to them. They can take away His clothing, His friends, even His life. But they cannot take away His desire to love and to forgive His tenants—His desire to love and forgive you.

We are blessed people—blessed tenants who work in the Father's vineyard. Blessed tenants who have been given some wonderful gifts, who have been given grace upon grace. Blessed tenants who love and serve and obey that One who is the owner of all.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

In verse 42, Jesus quotes messianic Psalm 118. (See Ps. 118:22-23.) Why do you think Jesus quoted this verse? What or who is the stone what was rejected? In what way did it become the cornerstone?

After the Jewish leaders questioned the authority of Jesus, He told them two parables. What warning was Jesus giving those leaders, and others who choose to reject Him?

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

How does this parable, told by Isaiah, describe Israel's unfaithfulness to God?

Describe a fruitful Christian life versus an unfruitful Christian life.

The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7

I will sing for the one I love
a song about his vineyard:
My loved one had a vineyard
on a fertile hillside.
2 He dug it up and cleared it of stones
and planted it with the choicest vines.
He built a watchtower in it
and cut out a winepress as well.
Then he looked for a crop of good grapes,
but it yielded only bad fruit.
3 "Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.
4 What more could have been done for my vineyard
than I have done for it?
When I looked for good grapes,
why did it yield only bad?
5 Now I will tell you
what I am going to do to my vineyard:
I will take away its hedge,
and it will be destroyed;
I will break down its wall,
and it will be trampled.
6 I will make it a wasteland,
neither pruned nor cultivated,
and briers and thorns will grow there.
I will command the clouds
not to rain on it."
7 The vineyard of the Lord Almighty
is the nation of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are the vines he delighted in.
And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed;
for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

The Epistle: Philippians 3:4b-14

4 though I myself have reasons for such confidence.
If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.
7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. 10 I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

The Psalm: Psalm 80:7-19

Restore us, God Almighty;
make your face shine on us,
that we may be saved.
8 You transplanted a vine from Egypt;
you drove out the nations and planted it.
9 You cleared the ground for it,
and it took root and filled the land.
10 The mountains were covered with its shade,
the mighty cedars with its branches.
11 Its branches reached as far as the Sea,
its shoots as far as the River.
12 Why have you broken down its walls
so that all who pass by pick its grapes?
13 Boars from the forest ravage it,
and insects from the fields feed on it.
14 Return to us, God Almighty!
Look down from heaven and see! Watch over this vine,
15 the root your right hand has planted,
the son you have raised up for yourself.
16 Your vine is cut down, it is burned with fire;
at your rebuke your people perish.
17 Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand,
the son of man you have raised up for yourself.
18 Then we will not turn away from you;
revive us, and we will call on your name.
19 Restore us, Lord God Almighty;
make your face shine on us,
that we may be saved.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Verse to Remember: Philippians 3:8

If knowing Jesus Christ worth more than anything else in this world, what does that mean for how we live our lives?

What is the "vine from Egypt" that this psalm is describing? (see Exodus 12:33-42*)*
What happened to the "vine"?

Who will restore the vine?

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Look back at the Gospel reading. Describe the "cornerstone" and how "the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

The Hymn: God Loved the World so that He Gave *LSB* 571

God loved the world so that He gave
His only Son the lost to save,
That all who would in Him believe
Should everlasting life receive.

Christ Jesus is the ground of faith,
Who was made flesh and suffered death;
All then who trust in Him alone
Are built on this chief cornerstone.

God would not have the sinner die;
His Son with saving grace is nigh;
His Spirit in the Word declares
How we in Christ are heaven's heirs.

Be of good cheer, for God's own Son
Forgives all sins which you have done;
And, justified by Jesus' blood,
Your Baptism grants the highest good.

If you are sick, if death is near,
This truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death;
That is the firmest ground of faith.

Glory to God the Father, Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To You, O blessèd Trinity,
Be praise now and eternally!

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God loved the world

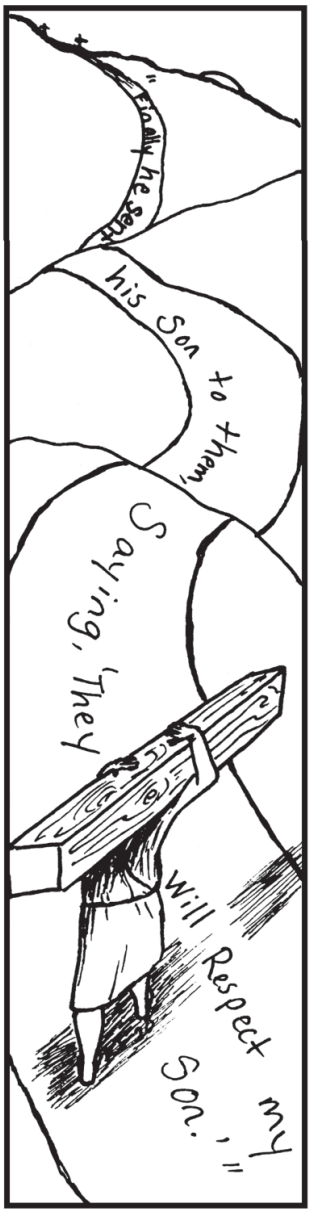
Faith + Life Connections

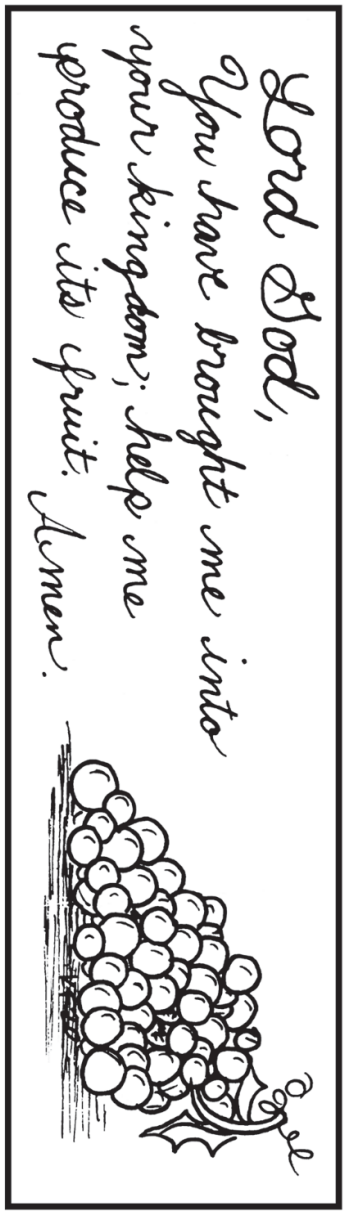
Jesus often taught using parables: earthly stories with a heavenly lesson. In this parable, Jesus was warning the Jewish leaders that if they rejected Him, they would be rejected from God's kingdom and it would be given to others. God sent His Son for us. We don't reject Him –we welcome Him as our Savior!
Matthew 21:33-46

Have grapes for a snack. Which is better—good, sweet grapes, or bad, sour grapes? God wants us to produce good fruit—words and actions that show the love of Jesus.
Isaiah 5:1-7

Have a family race and give a prize to everyone. St. Paul talks about our Christian life as a race. He says, "Keep on going!" Keep on reading God's Word, keep on praying, keep on receiving His love and forgiveness. Jesus has won the prize for you—heaven!
Philippians 3:4b-14

Verse to Remember
I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things.
Philippians 3:8





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Prayer for the Week
Gracious God, You gave Your Son into the hands of sinful men who killed Him. Forgive us when we reject Your unfailing love, and grant us the fullness of Your salvation; 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

October 5–October 10, 2026

This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, October 11.
Proper 23

The Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: 2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. 4 "Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.'
5 "But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. 6 The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. 7 The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.
8 "Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. 9 So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' 10 So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. 11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. 12 He asked, 'How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?' The man was speechless.
13 "Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'
14 "For many are invited, but few are chosen."

Devotion on the Gospel

Who doesn't love a party? Getting together with family and friends, usually because we have something to celebrate, is one of life's joys. COVID-19 has made us realize that something big is missing when we can't get together, when we can't enjoy a graduation, a confirmation, a wedding, even a baseball game together.

Jesus loved a good party. In fact, Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven is like a party. The kingdom of heaven is like a wedding banquet, a feast, a party! And at Jesus' party, all sorts of people come. He doesn't invite the good and snub the bad. He invited all. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" Scripture says. All are invited to the heavenly party.

Come to the wedding feast, God invites. Come to the party. All you need for the party, God says, is to wear the right clothes.

Really? I guess it was too good to be true. Had to be a catch.

But there's no catch. Because our God gives us those royal robes of righteousness to wear to the party. He wraps us up in the garments of the justified—made and sewn and tailored when Jesus died on the cross, when He poured out His life for us, when He won forgiveness and life and salvation.

And it doesn't matter who you were before the banquet. It doesn't matter what you were wearing before the banquet. Christ covers it all with His righteous clothing. The psalmist says, "Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered." We are covered by the garments of righteousness, and they are made just for you and me. And God says to those He invites—He says to you: All is ready. Come to the party!

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Think about the characteristics of the king in the Parable of the Wedding Banquet. Make a list. What do these qualities tell you about God, our heavenly King?

It is clear from Jesus' parable that not everyone whom Jesus calls comes to the banquet. Not everyone responds with faith in Jesus as Savior. But the Bible speaks of a multitude in heaven, a group there not because of their outward appearance, but because of their faith in Jesus. We will be there because of Christ and His robes of righteousness! (See Revelation 7:9-17)

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

The Bible often uses the imagery of a feast or banquet to picture the glories of heaven. Why do you think that is?

What mountain is Isaiah referring to here? (See Hebrews 12:22-23*) What other significant mountains do we hear about in Scripture? (see* Exodus 19; Matthew 17:1-9*)*

Paul wrote this letter to the Philippians while he was in jail. What reasons does he have to "rejoice in the Lord?"

Paul makes it clear that earthly possessions don't make him content. What is it that gives Paul (and us!) contentment, whatever the circumstance?

The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare
a feast of rich food for all peoples,
a banquet of aged wine—
the best of meats and the finest of wines.
7 On this mountain he will destroy
the shroud that enfolds all peoples,
the sheet that covers all nations;
8 he will swallow up death forever.
The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears
from all faces;
he will remove his people's disgrace
from all the earth.
The Lord has spoken.
9 In that day they will say,
"Surely this is our God;
we trusted in him, and he saved us.
This is the Lord, we trusted in him;
let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."

The Epistle: Philippians 4:4-13

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. 9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.
10 I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.
11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

The Psalm: Psalm 23

1 The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
3 he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.
4 Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.

The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Verse to Remember:
Psalm 23:1
or all of Psalm 23

Because of the beautiful promises of our Good Shepherd, the 23rd Psalm is a favorite for many. Try to take some time and memorize Psalm 23 this week.

Look in the hymnal or online for hymns and songs based on Psalm 23 and sing them together. (See LSB 625, 709, 710, 711, 740)

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

The invitation of Jesus to His heavenly banquet goes out to all! Jesus said, "Ask the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest field." (Matthew 9:38)

Jesus has given his invitation to you to deliver to others. Spread the reign of God the Lord! Who will you invite to the banquet?

The Hymn: Spread the Reign of God the Lord *LSB* 830

Spread the reign of God the Lord,
Spoken, written, mighty Word;
Ev'rywhere His creatures call
To His heav'nly banquet hall.

Tell how God the Father's will
Made the world, upholds it still,
How His own dear Son He gave
Us from sin and death to save.

Tell of our Redeemer's grace,
Who, to save our human race
And to pay rebellion's price,
Gave Himself as sacrifice.

Tell of God the Spirit giv'n
Now to guide us on to heav'n,
Strong and holy, just and true,
Working both to will and do.

Enter, mighty Word, the field;
Ripe the promise of its yield.
But the reapers, oh, how few
For the work there is to do!

Lord of harvest, great and kind,
Rouse to action heart and mind;
Let the gath'ring nations all
See Your light and heed Your call.

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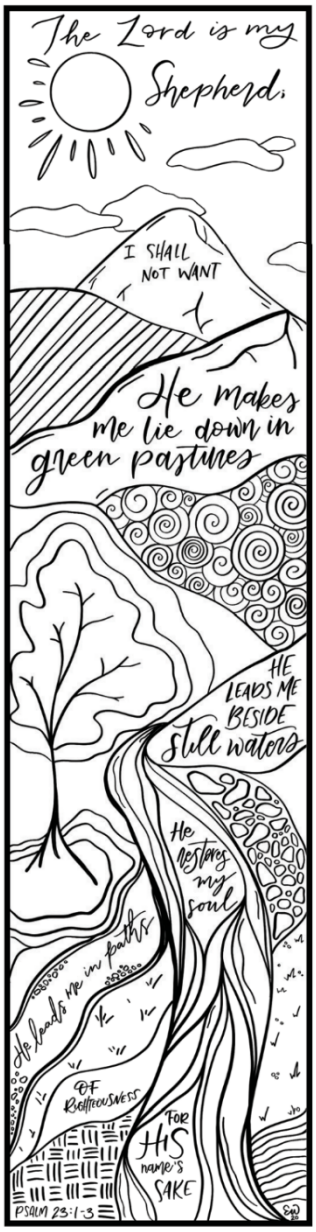
Faith + Life Connections

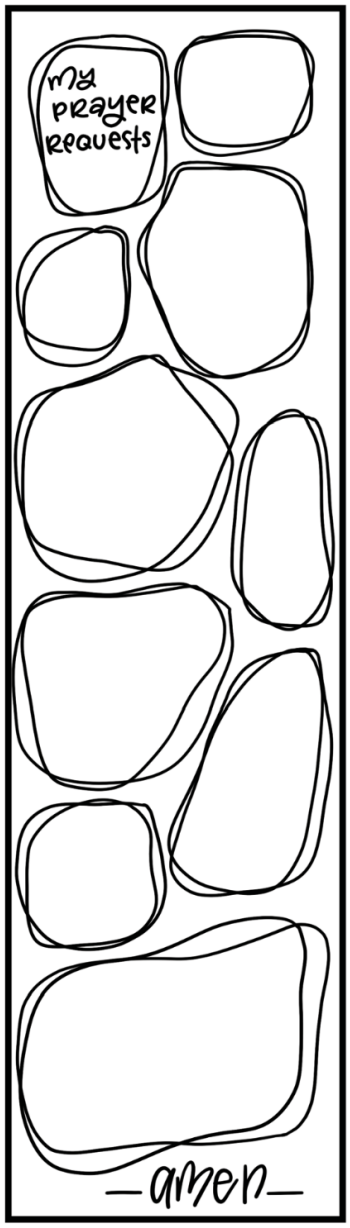
What do you do when you receive an invitation to a birthday party? Maybe you plan the gift you'll bring, or what you're going to wear. Did you know that God has invited you to a party? It's the best party of all—heaven! You don't have to worry about a gift or clothes either—He gives them to you: love and forgiveness and grace. It's a party you won't want to miss—and it's for everyone!
Matthew 22:1-14

Look online for the words and music to the song "Rejoice in the Lord Always." Name some things about God and His care for you that make you rejoice!
Philippians 4:4-13

Read or listen to Psalm 23. Imagine that you are a sheep. How does the shepherd in Psalm 23 take care of you? How does Jesus, your Good Shepherd, take care of you?
Psalm 23

Verse to Remember
The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
Psalm 23:1
Or memorize all of Psalm 23





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Prayer for the Week
Almighty God, You invite us to trust in You for our salvation. Deal with us not in the severity of Your judgment but by the greatness of Your mercy; 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

October 12–October 17, 2026

This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, October 18.
Proper 24

The Gospel: Matthew 22:15-22

15 Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. 16 They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. "Teacher," they said, "we know that you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by others, because you pay no attention to who they are. 17 Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay the imperial tax to Caesar or not?"
18 But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, "You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? 19 Show me the coin used for paying the tax." They brought him a denarius, 20 and he asked them, "Whose image is this? And whose inscription?"
21 "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said to them, "So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." 22 When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away.

Devotion on the Gospel

The Pharisees had had enough of Jesus. They wanted to trap Him, to trick Him, so they could get rid of Him. So they asked Him the "gotcha" question: Should we pay taxes to Caesar or not? Jesus answers "yes" and He's a traitor to Israel. Jesus answers "no" and in no time He would be arrested for being a revolutionary.

"Show me the money for the tax," Jesus said. "You see the face on this coin? It's his, give it back to him. Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. But give to God the things that are God's.

It's no wonder that the Pharisees marveled at Jesus. Scripture is clear that God's image is impressed, not on coins of the nation, but on human life itself. Caesar had his image on a coin or two. God's image is on every man, woman, and child! Yes, give to Caesar what is Caesar's. But also give to God what is God's. And what is God's? We are!

It is a call to commitment. It is a call to make Him our number one priority. It's a call to put Him before wife, husband, child, job, school, house, retirement, investments, or anything else. It's a call to put His mission first on our daily agendas no matter the cost or inconvenience. Give to God what belongs to God.

Not that we have an easy time doing that. It does not come naturally for us. So God comes to us and says: First, I'll make a commitment to you: a commitment of love, a commitment that included a cross. He sent Jesus to us to pay the punishment that we deserve. And as He was nailed to that cross on Calvary and as he died, He took all our sins upon Himself. What an incredible commitment! What an incredible love! He gave up His life for us.

It's His commitment to us that causes us to sing:
Take my life, and let it be, Consecrated Lord to Thee;
Take my moments and my days; Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

In one short sentence, Jesus declares that we owe loyalty and obedience to two "realms"—the civil realm and the heavenly realm. How do we show allegiance to earthly rulers as well as heavenly rulers?

The apostle Peter said in Acts 5:29, "We must obey God rather than men!" What does this mean in light of Jesus' teaching here in Matthew 22?

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

God worked through a pagan king, Cyrus, to save His people, Israel. What comfort should this give to Christians living in our world today?

God's ways can be confusing to us! (See Isaiah 55:8-9.*) Here God anoints an unbelieving king to accomplish His purposes. Think about and share other times in Scripture and perhaps in your life when God worked in mysterious ways.*

St. Paul gives thanks to God for the Thessalonians. How did these people become filled with faith, hope, and love? (See verses 4–5.)

Paul commends the Thessalonians for their faith which "has become known everywhere." Paul was commending them for proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed. What encouragement does this give us to live out our faith in our daily lives?

The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 45:1-7

"This is what the Lord says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: 2 I will go before you and will level the mountains; I will break down gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron. 3 I will give you hidden treasures, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who summons you by name. 4 For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen, I summon you by name and bestow on you a title of honor, though you do not acknowledge me.
5 I am the Lord, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me, 6 so that from the rising of the sun to the place of its setting people may know there is none besides me. I am the Lord, and there is no other. 7 I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the Lord, do all these things.

The Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

Paul, Silas and Timothy,
To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ:
Grace and peace to you.
2 We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. 3 We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.
4 For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5 because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. 6 You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. 7 And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. 8 The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, 9 for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, 10 and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath.

The Psalm: Psalm 96:1-9

1 Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
2 Sing to the Lord, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
3 Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
4 For great is the Lord and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.
5 For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the Lord made the heavens.
6 Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.
7 Ascribe to the Lord, all you families of nations,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
8 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
bring an offering and come into his courts.
9 Worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness;
tremble before him, all the earth.

Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Verse to Remember: Psalm 96:2

King David sang this psalm as he brought the ark of the covenant into Jerusalem in victory (see 1 Chronicles 16:1–7, 23–29*). God is the King who reigns and the psalmist calls all to praise His holy name.*

The psalmist first directs his song to God (verse 1-2), but then he directs his speaking to others (verse 3). How does this inspire and encourage us to proclaim the message of grace with others?

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

How often do we think about the great price that God paid for our salvation?

As you sing or listen to this hymn, say a prayer of thanks to our loving, giving God.

The Hymn: Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us *LSB* 851

Lord of glory, You have bought us
With Your lifeblood as the price,
Never grudging for the lost ones
That tremendous sacrifice;
And with that have freely given
Blessings countless as the sand
To the_unthankful and the evil
With Your own unsparing hand.

Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to give You
Gladly, freely of Your own.
With the sunshine of Your goodness
Melt our thankless hearts of stone
Till our cold and selfish natures,
Warmed by You, at length believe
That more happy and more blessèd
'Tis to give than to receive.

Wondrous honor You have given
To our humblest charity
In Your own mysterious sentence,
"You have done it all to Me."
Can it be, O gracious Master,
That You deign for alms to sue,
Saying by Your poor and needy,
"Give as I have giv'n to you"?

Lord of glory, You have bought us
With Your lifeblood as the price,
Never grudging for the lost ones
That tremendous sacrifice.
Give us faith to trust You boldly,
Hope, to stay our souls on You;
But, oh, best of all Your graces,
With Your love our love renew.

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Lord of glory, You have bought us

With Your lifeblood as the price.

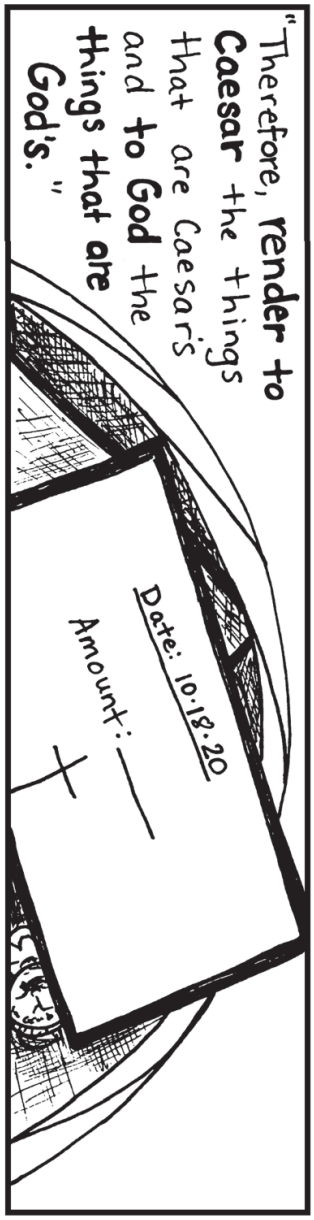
Faith + Life Connections

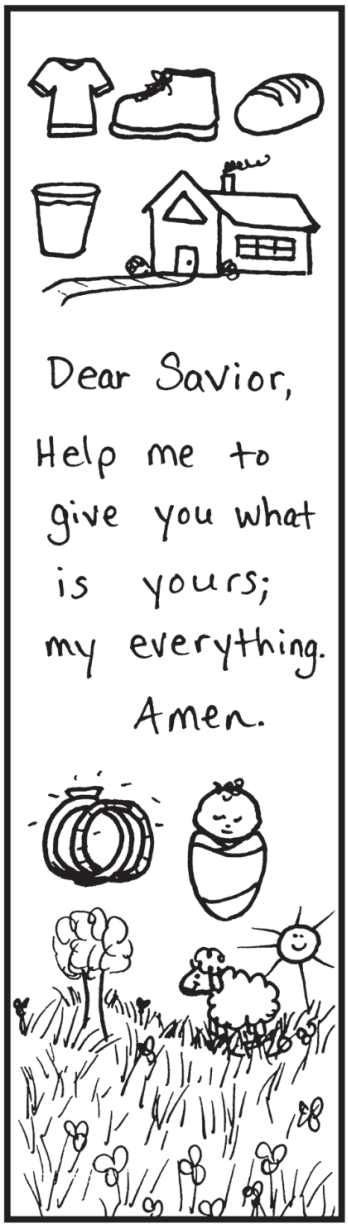
The Jewish leaders were trying to trick Jesus again, asking, “Who should we pay taxes to: the government or God?” That’s like asking, “Who should you obey: your parents or God?” I’ll guess you know the answer: both! Talk about how you obey both earthly leaders and God.
Matthew 22:15–22

Play “Magic Mirror.” Two people face each other. As one moves, the other “mirrors,” or imitates, their actions. St. Paul praised the Thessalonians for imitating him and Jesus by sharing and living out the Gospel. How can you imitate the love of Jesus this week?
1 Thessalonians 1:1–10

Do you like to sing? What do you sing about? King David liked to sing about God and how wonderful He is! He even wrote songs to praise God. Work with your family to write a praise song to God. Then sing it together!
Psalm 96:1–9

Verse to Remember
Sing to the Lord, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.
Psalm 96:2





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Prayer for the Week
O God, the protector of all who trust in You, have mercy on us that with You as our ruler and guide we may so pass through things temporal that we lose not the things eternal; 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

October 19–October 24, 2026

This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, October 25.
Reformation

The Gospel: John 8:31-36

31 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. 32 Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."
33 They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"
34 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.
35 Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Devotion on the Gospel

It's not the 4th of July, but we are talking about freedom today. Really, it's another type of Independence Day, because on Sunday we celebrate the Reformation. And the Gospel assigned for this Reformation Day talks about freedom.

Now a lot of people have many different interpretations about what freedom is. In fact, for a lot of us, freedom is the removal of restrictions. So if we can just get rid of the restrictions, then we will be free. We'll live the way we want to live. We'll do what we want to do. That's freedom! But really, that's not freedom at all. Not real freedom. It's only another form of slavery—slavery to ourselves and our sinful nature.

Jesus says, "If you continue in my Word, then you are truly my disciples and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." That's where true freedom is found! In hearing and knowing and following and doing God's Word.

Freedom is found in the fact that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. All have sinned. All have fallen. All deserve nothing but God's wrath. But God has sent Jesus into the world to forgive sins. He sent Jesus to the cross to declare us free. We are free to be His people, free to be His servants, free to be hearers and doers of the Word. And Jesus says, if you continue in my Word, then you are truly my disciples, and the truth of that Gospel will make you free.

If the Son sets you free,
you will be free indeed.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Jesus said that "everyone who sins is a slave to sin." In what ways in your life have you noticed sin taking you captive? What can set us free? (see verse 36).

In Jesus Christ we find freedom. What are we free from and what are we free to do? (See Psalm 119:32; Romans 6:18; Galatians 5:13-14; Ephesians 3:12; Revelation 1:5; Hebrews 2:14-15.*)*

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

The word "gospel" can be translated "good news." What good news was the angel delivering in John's vision? Why does John describe it as eternal?

A theme of the Reformation was the priority and truth of the Word of God. How do these verses support this Reformation theme?

In what ways might people attempt to "justify" themselves before God? Why is this not possible? (See Romans 3:10, 23.*)*

Verse to Remember: Romans 3:23-24

Even though we cannot justify ourselves before God, Paul tells us that we are "justified freely by God's grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:24) How might this good news affect our relationship with God and with one another?

The First Reading: Revelation 14:6-7

6 Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal gospel
to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language
and people. 7 He said in a loud voice, "Fear God and give him glory,
because the hour of his judgment has come. Worship him who made the
heavens, the earth, the sea and the springs of water."

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

The Epistle: Romans 3:19-28

19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are
under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world
held accountable to God. 20 Therefore no one will be declared righteous in
God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become
conscious of our sin.
21 But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made
known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness is
given through faith in[a] Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no
difference between Jew and Gentile, 23 <u>for all have sinned and fall short of
the glory of God, 24 and all are justified freely by his grace through the
redemption that came by Christ Jesus.</u> 25 God presented Christ as a
sacrifice of atonement,[b] through the shedding of his blood—to be
received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in
his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—
26 he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to
be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.
27 Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. Because of what law? The law
that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. 28 For we
maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.

The Psalm: Psalm 46

1 God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
3 though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.
4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
5 God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
6 Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
7 The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
8 Come and see what the Lord has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
9 He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields with fire.
10 He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth."
11 The Lord Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Why should we not be afraid, even though "the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea?" (verses 1 and 7)

God invites us to "be still and know that I am God." (verse 10) Take some extra time this week for prayer, devotion time, reflection, meditation, and Bible study.

Notes, Thoughts, Questions

Our God has spoken to us. He is not silent! He speaks through Christ, the living Word and He speaks through His written Word, inspired by the Holy Spirit. The Word of God has the power to transform, encourage, empower, and save. Read Romans 1:16-17 *and then meditate on the words of this song.*

The Hymn: Speak, O Lord *Getty/Townend*

Speak, O Lord, as we come to You
To receive the food of your holy word.
Take Your truth, plant it deep in us;
Shape and fashion us in Your likeness,
That the light of Christ might be seen today
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfil in us
All Your purposes, for Your glory.

Teach us Lord full obedience,
Holy reverence, true humility.
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
In the radiance of Your purity.
Cause our faith to rise
Cause our eyes to see,
Your majestic love and authority.
Words of power that can never fail;
Let their truth prevail over unbelief.

Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds;
Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us.
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time,
That will echo down through eternity.
And by grace we'll stand on Your promises;
And by faith we'll walk as You walk with us.
Speak, O Lord, 'til your church is built
And the earth is filled with Your glory.

Speak, O Lord, as we come to You To receive the food of your holy Word

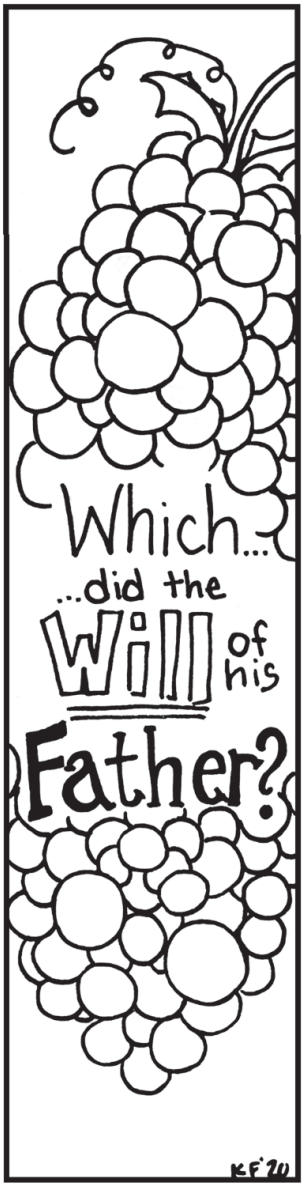
Faith + Life Connections

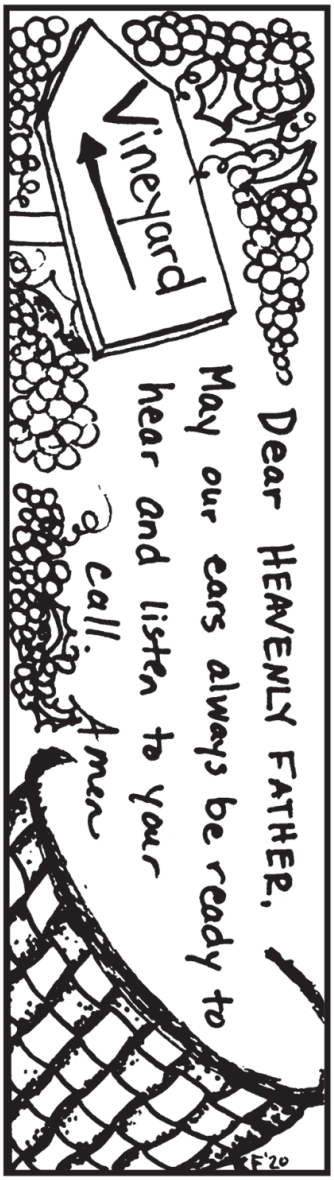
What if you could do whatever you wanted to, all the time? You could eat cookies and ice cream for every meal! Stay up past midnight every night! Never change your underwear! But after a while, it wouldn't be so fun anymore, would it? Jesus said that he made us free, but not free from all the rules. We are free to follow Him and do His will. Freedom in Jesus makes us truly happy!
John 8:31-36

Is there anyone who has never sinned? Never said a bad word or thought a bad thought, never disobeyed, and always put others before him or herself? No one but Jesus! We all sin. We all need Jesus' forgiveness. Say a thank-you prayer for God's love & grace!
Romans 3:19-28

Look up "Psalm 46 Song" by Jason Silver. Be still and listen.
Psalm 46

Verse to Remember
For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.
Romans 3:23-24





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Prayer for the Week
Almighty and gracious Lord, pour out Your Holy Spirit on Your faithful people. Keep us steadfast in Your grace and truth, protect and deliver us in times of temptation, defend us against all enemies, and grant to Your Church Your saving peace; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.