

# The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

## August 8, 2021

**Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty** Lutheran Service Book 901, Lutheran Worship 198, The Lutheran Hymnal 1



1 O - pen now thy gates of beau - ty; Zi - on, let me  
2 Gra - cious God, I come be - fore Thee; Come Thou al - so  
3 Here Thy praise is glad - ly chant - ed; Here Thy seed is  
4 Thou my faith in - crease and quick - en; Let me keep Thy

en - ter there, Where my soul in joy - ful du - ty  
un - to me. Where we find Thee and a - dore Thee,  
du - ly sown. Let my soul, where it is plant - ed,  
gift di - vine, How - so - e'er temp - ta - tions thick - en;

Waits for Him who an - swers prayer. Oh, how bless - ed  
There a heav'n on earth must be. To my heart, O  
Bring forth pre - cious sheaves a - lone, So that all I  
May Thy Word still o'er me shine As my guid - ing

is this place, Filled with sol - ace, light, and grace!  
en - ter Thou; Let it be Thy tem - ple now!  
hear may be Fruit - ful un - to life in me.  
star through life, As my com - fort in all strife.

- 5 Speak, O God, and I will hear Thee;  
Let Thy will be done indeed.  
May I undisturbed draw near Thee  
While Thou dost Thy people feed.  
Here of life the fountain flows;  
Here is balm for all our woes.

**L** In the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**L** Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**C** who made heaven and earth. (*Psalm 124:8*)

**L** Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

**C** Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. (*Psalm 19:12, 13*)

**L** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord who could stand?

**C** But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared. (*Psalm 130:3–4*)

**L** Let us, confess before God that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and as His people let us take refuge in His infinite mercy seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, saying:

**C** God, be merciful to me, a sinner, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

(*Luke 18:13*)

**L** Almighty God, merciful Father, in Your holy Church, You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C** Amen.

### Introit Psalm 34:8–10; antiphon Psalm 145:16

**L** You open your hand;  
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

**C** Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!  
Blessèd is the man who takes refuge in him!

**L** Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints,  
for those who fear him have no lack!

**C** The young lions suffer want and hunger;  
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

**C** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

**L** You open your hand;  
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

### Kyrie

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

### Gloria in Excelsis ~ Glory to God in the Highest

**L** Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

**C** Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father: We worship You, we give You thanks, and we praise You for Your glory.

**L** Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, You are Lord and God, You are the Lamb of God:

**C** Lord Jesus Christ, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

**L** Lord Jesus Christ, You are seated at the right hand of the Father; and we ask you to graciously receive our prayer.

**C** For You alone are the Holy One,  
You alone are the Lord,  
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### Collect of the Day

**L** Let us pray: Gracious Father, Your blessed Son came down from heaven to be the true bread that gives life to the world. Grant that Christ, the bread of life, may live in us and we in Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**C** Amen.

### 1 Kings 19:1–8

<sup>1</sup>Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. <sup>2</sup>Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.” <sup>3</sup>Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

<sup>4</sup>But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, “It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers.” <sup>5</sup>And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, “Arise and eat.” <sup>6</sup>And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. <sup>7</sup>And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, “Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you.” <sup>8</sup>And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.  
**C** Thanks be to God.

### Gradual Psalm 34:9, 19, alt.

**L** Fear the Lord, you his saints,  
**C** for those who fear him lack nothing!  
**L** Many are the afflictions of the righteous,  
**C** but the Lord delivers him out of them all.

### Psalm 34:1–8

**L** <sup>1</sup>I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.  
**C** <sup>2</sup>**My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad.**  
**L** <sup>3</sup>Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!  
**C** <sup>4</sup>**I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.**  
**L** <sup>5</sup>Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed.  
**C** <sup>6</sup>**This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.**  
**L** <sup>7</sup>The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.  
**C** <sup>8</sup>**Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blesséd is the man who takes refuge in him!**

### Ephesians 4:17—5:2

<sup>17</sup>Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. <sup>18</sup>They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that

is in them, due to their hardness of heart. <sup>19</sup>They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. <sup>20</sup>But that is not the way you learned Christ!— <sup>21</sup>assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup>to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup>and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup>and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

<sup>25</sup>Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. <sup>26</sup>Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup>and give no opportunity to the devil. <sup>28</sup>Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. <sup>29</sup>Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup>And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup>Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup>Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

<sup>5:1</sup>Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup>And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### Verse of the Day: John 6:51a, b

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. Alleluia.

### John 6:35–51

**L** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

<sup>35</sup>Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. <sup>36</sup>But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. <sup>37</sup>All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. <sup>38</sup>For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. <sup>39</sup>And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. <sup>40</sup>For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

<sup>41</sup>So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” <sup>42</sup>They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’” <sup>43</sup>Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves. <sup>44</sup>No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. <sup>45</sup>It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me— <sup>46</sup>not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. <sup>47</sup>Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. <sup>48</sup>I am the bread of life. <sup>49</sup>Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. <sup>50</sup>This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. <sup>51</sup>I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

**L** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

**C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father  
Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living  
and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**Son of God, Eternal Savior** Lutheran Service Book 842, Lutheran Worship 394, The Lutheran Hymnal n/a



1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, Source of life and  
2 As You, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, So may we for  
3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and  
4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, Source of life and



truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us  
oth - ers live. Free - ly have Your gifts been grant - ed;  
Prince of Peace; Hush the storm of strife and pas - sion,  
truth and grace, Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us



Hal - lows all our hu - man race, You our Head, who, throned in  
Free-ly may Your ser - vants give. Yours the gold and Yours the  
Bid its cru - el dis - cords cease. By Your pa - tient years of  
Hal - lows all our hu - man race: By Your pray - ing, by Your



glo - ry, For Your own will ev - er plead: Fill us with Your  
sil - ver, Yours the wealth of land and sea; We but stew - ards  
toil - ing, By Your si - lent hours of pain, Quench our fe - vered  
will - ing That Your peo - ple should be one, Grant, O grant our



love and pit - y, Heal our wrongs, and help our need.  
of Your boun - ty Held in sol - emn trust will be.  
thirst of plea - sure, Stem our self - ish greed of gain.  
hope's fru - i - tion: Here on earth Your will be done.

Public domain

## Devotional Thoughts:

We are in the middle of a three-week reading of Jesus' words in John concerning the Bread of Life. It's hard to pick up in the middle of a story. Yet, there is so much in what Jesus has to say that three weeks isn't sufficient time to cover everything.

Our reading for last week concluded with "'For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always'" (John 6:33-34). In answer to this request, Jesus says at the beginning of our reading for this week, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

As we learn a few verses later, this is hard for them to believe. They complain, "How could Jesus be the Bread of Life when we know his father and mother?"

This is always the real issue. It's hard for us to believe the wonderful news of salvation and eternal life through faith in Jesus. Our sinful human nature looks for every imaginable excuse not to believe.

Much of our modern world is consumed with materialism. It rejects the miraculous. We only want to believe what we can see and touch. But is this really something new? Remember that the Apostle Thomas chose to reject the resurrection of Jesus unless he could touch the nail prints in Jesus' hands and put his hand in Jesus' side!

As we struggle with unbelief, we hear these comforting words from Jesus, "Whoever comes to me I will never cast out" (John 6:37). No matter how much we have doubted in the past, no matter how much we have strayed from the straight and narrow, no matter how much hurt or pain we may have caused, Jesus will not turn us away when we finally come to Him! In fact, "Everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day" (John 6:40).

For the young, time moves slowly. When I was ten years old, summer vacation seemed to last so much longer than it does now. When we have a long and seemingly endless expanse of time in front of us, it is easy to forget about eternity. "Live for today and don't worry about tomorrow" is the motto of youth.

But time passes. Summers fade. The last days of earthly life soon approach.

About this time of year long ago, I had a conversation with my neighbor across a fence. He was digging potatoes. We lived in a part of town where it was very difficult to grow anything but my neighbors were very successful gardeners. Not only did they have an abundantly producing vegetable garden, but their home was surrounded by beautiful flower beds. Very few, if any, homes looked as lovely as their modest dwelling.

At one point, my neighbor said to me, "Phil, we drove past your church and the flowers look amazing." The ladies had just surrounded our church with new flower beds.

Of course, I was proud of our little church. I quickly responded, "Our church looks pretty good on the inside too, why don't you stop in sometime."

His wife was working nearby in a flower garden listening to our conversation. At this point, she chimed in, "He really believes but he was hurt by the church when he was young."

But my neighbor whispered to me so his wife couldn't hear, "Phil, I don't believe a thing." I was disappointed but this was no time to debate theology so I simply said, "I'm sorry to hear that."

A few weeks later at about 9 o'clock at night, we heard a firm and insistent knocking at our front door. When I swung the door open, I saw my neighbor's wife standing there in tears. I asked what was wrong and she told me that they had just returned from the city where they learned that her husband had liver cancer. She asked me to come to their home.

As I walked to their door with her, I wondered why they had come to me. Only a few weeks before, her husband had told me of his unbelief.

I soon was standing next to his bed. I shared the Gospel and Bible passages about Jesus' love and forgiveness and eternal life. I prayed. Soon I was home and bewildered by this turn of events.

Over the weeks, I visited his bedside a few more times. Then one Sunday afternoon, an ambulance was in their driveway. I entered their home wondering what I would find. There was my neighbor on a stretcher. I went to his side.

I again shared the Gospel of salvation through faith in Christ and asked him if he believed. He answered that he did believe. Then I asked if he had been baptized. He had been baptized. I assured him of his salvation. That was the last time I saw him. But I'm sure that I will see him again in heaven.

God works in mysterious ways! Here was a confirmed unbeliever. But God worked things out so that the church built a parsonage next to his home!

He had a very dangerous job. He and his wife regularly drove many, many miles to visit their families and friends. He could have died suddenly in an industrial accident or an automobile crash. But God allowed him to be diagnosed with a disease that gave him time to reflect on eternity!

Jesus' message on that day so long ago is his same message to you today. "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life" (John 6:47). May God grant that faith to each of us.

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:4-7).

God's richest blessings to you in Christ.

**L** Father of our risen, ascended and glorified Lord, You have promised that those who believe in Christ as the true and living bread will never hunger nor thirst. By Your Holy Spirit, keep us steadfast in faith. Give us grace to live out our lives in repentance and forgiveness, and keep our eyes ever focused on the life that never ends, knowing that You will raise us up on the Last Day; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

**L** Lord of all, hear our prayers for the hungry and the homeless. Provide for them not only bread to satisfy their hunger but, above all, the true bread of life, Jesus Christ, who alone can fill and satisfy every need of body and soul.

**C Amen.**

**L** God and Father of all, enable us to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, and forgiving one another as we have received forgiveness through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C Amen.**

**L** Almighty God, send Your holy angels to watch over all of our loved ones, especially those who live in distant places. We thank You for the protection granted to all who have attended to our needs during the pandemic. As we again experience an increase in infections, we ask for Your continued protection and grace.

**C Amen.**

**C** 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.

**C** 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.

**L** Let us bless the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**L** The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

**C** Amen.

**How Firm a Foundation** Lutheran Service Book 728, Lutheran Worship 411, The Lutheran Hymnal 427



1 How firm a foun - da - tion, O saints of the Lord,  
2 "Fear not! I am with you, O be not dis - mayed,  
3 "The soul that on Je - sus has leaned for re - pose  
4 "When through fi - ery tri - als your path - way will lie,  
Is laid for your faith in His ex - cel - lent Word!  
For I am your God and will still give you aid;  
I will not, I will not, de - sert to his foes;  
My grace, all - suf - fi - cient, will be your sup - ply.  
What more can He say than to you He has said  
I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
That soul, though all hell should en - deav - or to shake,  
The flames will not hurt you; I on - ly de - sign  
Who un - to the Sav - ior for ref - uge have fled?  
Up - held by My righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand.  
I'll nev - er, no nev - er, no nev - er, for - sake!  
Your dross to con - sume and your gold to re - fine.

5 "Throughout all their lifetime My people will prove  
My sov'reign, eternal, unchangeable love;  
And then, when gray hairs will their temples adorn,  
Like lambs they will still in My bosom be borne."



**Service Notes:**

One person may serve as Leader or this may be shared with a number of individuals.

Read one or more of the lessons. Hymns may be sung or read. Use as much or little of this service as you would like.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Some liturgical portions are adapted from Lutheran Service Book © 2006 Concordia Publishing House. Lutheran Service Book License: 10002731 Christ Lutheran Church, Stevensville, Michigan

Hymns are in the public domain. The remainder of this work including adaptations and the Devotional Thoughts © 2021 Philip G. Quardokus. All rights reserved.

# Enhancing Your Worship

## Meditating on God's Word and Works

I will meditate on your wondrous works. Psalm 119:27  
My eyes are awake through the night watches,  
That I may meditate on Your word. Psalm 119:148 NKJV

### The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

#### August 9– August 14, 2021

#### Introduction

Most modern forms of mediation turn a person inward. Biblical meditation turns a person outward toward what God has said and done especially what He has said and done through Jesus for our salvation.

Each Sunday has its own special theme directing us to meditate on God's word and actions. This theme is found in the Propers of the Day (the parts of the service that change week to week). From Advent through the Easter season these themes focus our attention on the life of Jesus from His birth to His death and resurrection. There is always much more in the propers than can be covered in any Sunday service. God willing, I will use the propers for Sunday to provide you with a devotion each day to help you meditate on what God has done for you.

#### Monday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** Amen.

#### Introit Psalm 34:8–10; antiphon Psalm 145:16

- L** You open your hand;  
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.  
**C** Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!  
Blessèd is the man who takes refuge in him!  
**L** Oh, fear the Lord, you his saints,  
for those who fear him have no lack!  
**C** The young lions suffer want and hunger;  
but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.  
**C** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.  
**L** You open your hand;  
you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

#### Kyrie

- |                    |                            |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>L</b> O Lord,   | <b>C</b> Have Mercy on us. |
| <b>L</b> O Christ, | <b>C</b> Have Mercy on us. |
| <b>L</b> O Lord,   | <b>C</b> Have Mercy on us. |

Psalm 34:10 reminds us, "Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing." This may seem odd as you look around and see all the things that people have. You may think, "They have cars and homes that I'll never be

able to afford. They take vacations and eat in restaurants that are beyond my means. Why hasn't God blessed me like that?"

Most of us suffer from envy at some point in our lives. Children may long for better toys. Teens may want nicer looks or more athletic ability. College students may envy those who study less but have better grades. Graduates may wish for a better job. Such is life.

So we may ask, "How can the Bible say that those who seek the Lord lack no good thing?" As usual, the problem isn't with God. The problem is with us and our perspective.

In the film "It's a Wonderful Life," George Bailey is despondent and discouraged by the turn of events in his life. An angel grants him the opportunity to view a version of the world in which he has never been born. In the end, he learns how he has been blessed and has been a blessing to others throughout his life.

My mother and father grew up during the depression. My father suffered great periods of hunger when he was in combat. They often offered me indispensable perspectives on understanding the value of wealth and material possessions.

When we are given to bouts of envy or unhappiness with our lot in life, it is good to pause and adjust our attitude. The Apostle Paul gives this advice "Godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content" (1 Timothy 6:6-8).

May we always be content, knowing that in Christ we have the greatest gift of all!

**L** Let us pray. Lord, You have given us a house, home, and family. You have given us food and clothing and all that we need to support this body and life. Grant us contentment and the assurance of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

**C** Amen

## Tuesday

**L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## Verse of the Day: John 6:51a, b

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. Alleluia.

## Kyrie

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** Let us pray: Gracious Father, Your blessed Son came down from heaven to be the true bread that gives life to the world. Grant that Christ, the bread of life, may live in us and we in Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

Ernest Winter was a longtime principal of Christ Lutheran School in Stevensville, Michigan. He was known for his wit and pithy sayings. As I read the collect for this week, one came to mind. Ernie would often say, "I find that if I don't eat, I can't keep my weight up!" This is just one example of his delightfully humorous commentary on life.

Ernie, along with most Americans, did not have trouble keeping his weight up. Like me, most Americans are struggling to keep their weight down. Overeating is always a great temptation!

Yet Ernie's observation shines a light on a problem shared by many Christians. I find that if I don't eat the Bread of Life offered by my Savior, I can't keep my faith up. I don't recall ever meeting a Christian who was guilty of overeating the word of God!

Many of us are spiritually malnourished. When it comes time to eat, we seek spiritual junk food instead of the Bread of Life. We look for cotton candy on Sunday instead of the solid food of the Gospel. Some pastors have become life coaches. Others use sermons as an opportunity to provide seminars on success.

We can't keep our faith up with those things. We are only truly nourished when we are fed the Bread of Life.

Let us pray: Gracious Father, Your blessed Son came down from heaven to be the true bread that gives life to the world. Grant that Christ, the bread of life, may live in us and we in Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## Wednesday

**L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

### Verse of the Day: John 6:51a, b

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. **If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. Alleluia.**

### Psalm 34:1–8

**L** <sup>1</sup>I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

**C** <sup>2</sup>**My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad.**

**L** <sup>3</sup>Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!

**C** <sup>4</sup>**I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.**

**L** <sup>5</sup>Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed.

**C** <sup>6</sup>**This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him and saved him out of all his troubles.**

**L** <sup>7</sup>The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.

**C** <sup>8</sup>**Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blesséd is the man who takes refuge in him!**

## Kyrie

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

(Please download again for today's meditation)

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the knowledge of salvation through faith in Christ. Grant me the wisdom to know when to be silent and when to speak. Let my mouth speak the praise of the Lord and tell of the love that is our in Christ Jesus. Grant me the skill to teach the next generation about Jesus and His cross, the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Amen.

## Thursday

**L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**Verse of the Day: John 6:51a, b**

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. Alleluia.

**Kyrie**

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**1 Kings 19:1–8**

<sup>1</sup>Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. <sup>2</sup>Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.” <sup>3</sup>Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

<sup>4</sup>But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, “It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers.” <sup>5</sup>And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, “Arise and eat.” <sup>6</sup>And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. <sup>7</sup>And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, “Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you.” <sup>8</sup>And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

(Please download again for today’s meditation)

Prayer: Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Deliver us from evil and grant us eternal life through the Bread of Life, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Friday**

**L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**Verse of the Day: John 6:51a, b**

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. Alleluia.

**Kyrie**

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**Ephesians 4:17—5:2**

<sup>17</sup>Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. <sup>18</sup>They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that

is in them, due to their hardness of heart. <sup>19</sup>They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. <sup>20</sup>But that is not the way you learned Christ!— <sup>21</sup>assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup>to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup>and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup>and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

<sup>25</sup>Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. <sup>26</sup>Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup>and give no opportunity to the devil. <sup>28</sup>Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. <sup>29</sup>Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup>And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup>Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup>Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

<sup>5:1</sup>Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup>And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

(Please download again for today's meditation)

Prayer: O God, by the patient endurance of Your only-begotten Son You overcame the old evil foe. Help us to bear with patience the shortcomings and failures of our fellow believers as You have been patient and longsuffering with us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Saturday

**L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

## Gradual Psalm 34:9, 19, alt.

**L** Fear the Lord, you his saints,

**C** for those who fear him lack nothing!

**L** Many are the afflictions of the righteous,

**C** but the Lord delivers him out of them all.

## Verse of the Day: John 6:51a, b

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Alleluia.

**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. Alleluia.

## Kyrie

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

**L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

(Please download again for today's meditation)

Prayer: Merciful God, we ask You to cast the bright beams of Your light upon Your Church. . Guard and protect us from a spirit of indifference in doctrine and practice that we, being instructed by Your holy word, may walk in the light of Your truth through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Enhancing Your Worship © 2021 Philip G. Quardokus. All rights reserved.