

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

August 28, 2022

Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now

Lutheran Service Book 902, Lutheran Worship 201, The Lutheran Hymnal 3



1 Lord Je - sus Christ, be pres - ent now; Our hearts in
2 Un - seal our lips to sing Your praise In end - less
3 Then shall we join the hosts that cry, "O ho - ly,
4 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, Son, And Ho - ly



true de - vo - tion bow. Your Spir - it send with
hymns through all our days. In - crease our faith and
ho - ly Lord Most High!" And in the light of
Spir - it, Three in One! To You, O bless - ed



light di - vine, And let Your truth with - in us shine.
light our minds; And set us free from doubt that blinds.
that blest place We then shall see Your face to face.
Trin - i - ty, Be praise through - out e - ter - ni - ty!

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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 75:1–2, 6, 9; antiphon Psalm 75:7

- L** It is God who executes judgment,
putting down one and lifting up another.
- C** We give thanks to you, O God; we give thanks, for your name is near.
We recount your wondrous deeds.
- L** At the set time that I appoint
I will judge with equity.
- C** For not from the east or from the west
and not from the wilderness comes lifting up,
- L** But I will declare it forever;
I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.
- 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** It is God who executes judgment,
putting down one and lifting up another.

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: O Lord of grace and mercy, teach us by Your Holy Spirit to follow the example of Your Son in true humility, that we may withstand the temptations of the devil and with pure hearts and minds avoid ungodly pride; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Proverbs 25:2–10

- ²It is the glory of God to conceal things,
but the glory of kings is to search things out.
³As the heavens for height, and the earth for depth,
so the heart of kings is unsearchable.
⁴Take away the dross from the silver,
and the smith has material for a vessel;
⁵take away the wicked from the presence of the king,
and his throne will be established in righteousness.
⁶Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence
or stand in the place of the great,
⁷for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

What your eyes have seen
⁸do not hastily bring into court,
for what will you do in the end,
when your neighbor puts you to shame?
⁹Argue your case with your neighbor himself,
and do not reveal another's secret,
¹⁰lest he who hears you bring shame upon you,
and your ill repute have no end.

- 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 131

- L** ¹O LORD, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high;
C I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.
L ²But I have calmed and quieted my soul,
like a weaned child with its mother;
like a weaned child is my soul within me.
C ³O Israel, hope in the LORD from this time forth and forevermore.

Hebrews 13:1–17

¹Let brotherly love continue. ²Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. ³Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. ⁴Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. ⁵Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." ⁶So we can confidently say,

“The Lord is my helper;
I will not fear;
what can man do to me?”

⁷Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. ⁹Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them. ¹⁰We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. ¹¹For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. ¹²So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. ¹³Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. ¹⁴For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. ¹⁵Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. ¹⁶Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

¹⁷Obeys your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day: Luke 14:11

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia. And he who humbles himself will be exalted. Alleluia.

Luke 14:1–14

L The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 14th chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹One Sabbath, when [Jesus] went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully. ²And behold, there was a man before him who had dropsy. ³And Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?” ⁴But they remained silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away. ⁵And he said to them, “Which of you, having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day, will not immediately pull him out?” ⁶And they could not reply to these things.

⁷Now he told a parable to those who were invited, when he noticed how they chose the places of honor, saying to them, ⁸“When you are invited by someone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in a place of honor, lest someone more distinguished than you be invited by him, ⁹and he who invited you both will come and say to you, ‘Give your place to this person,’ and then you will begin with shame to take the lowest place. ¹⁰But when you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place, so that when your host comes he may say to you, ‘Friend, move up higher.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at table with you. ¹¹For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

¹²He said also to the man who had invited him, “When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. ¹³But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, ¹⁴and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

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



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Devotional thoughts:

Our Gospel lesson for today presents us with much more than we can consider all at once in our short devotional thoughts. When you read these verses in the Bible, you will notice that they are divided into three sections:

Healing of a Man on the Sabbath (Luke 14:1-6).

The Parable of the Wedding Feast (Luke 14:7-11).

The Parable of the Great Banquet (Luke 14:11-24).

In the historic one-year lectionary, this lesson consisted of only Luke 14:1-11 and was read on Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity. Martin Luther preached a sermon on this text on October 5, 1544, for The Dedication of Castle Church in Torgau. (Luther's wife, Katharina von Bora, died in Torgau and is buried in this church.) In English, his sermon is twelve pages of single-spaced text. The first eight pages are dedicated to Luke 14:1-6. For the sake of brevity, I'll confine myself to those six verses.

Let's set the scene. One Sabbath Day Jesus accepted an invitation to dinner at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees. We know from Scripture that Jesus attended the synagogue every Sabbath Day and taught there. One possible scenario is that this Pharisee was the ruler of the synagogue and hosted Jesus following the service. What we do know is that this Pharisee was a person of importance among the people who opposed Jesus.

I don't know if Jesus felt uncomfortable at that dinner. I know that I would.

I am reminded of certain antagonistic people that I have been obliged to deal with through the years. One particular person comes to mind who always was outwardly friendly. He greeted me with a smile on his face each time we met. During my first encounters with this gentleman, I was innocent and trusting. But I soon learned that he used every encounter to his advantage and usually was setting me up to look foolish or to undermine me in some way.

I couldn't understand why he chose to act in such a way. Then one day, I overheard him say, "Nothing good in the church ever happened through the actions of a pastor. Everything beneficial to the church could be attributed to laymen." I never did learn why he was so opposed to clergy. However, after that day, I realized that I was simply a target of opportunity because of my office.

As I read about Jesus at a dinner of the ruler of the Pharisees, I imagined myself at dinner with this individual. How would I act? Would I have accepted the invitation? How about you? Are there people like that in your life? Jesus willingly walked into the proverbial Lion's Den to bring the Gospel to His opponents.

We know that they are His opponents because Luke records, "They were watching him carefully." They intended to trap Him. Already in Luke 11:53-54, we read, "As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say."

When a man with dropsy arrived, Jesus preempted them with this question, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?" He knew what they were up to. Jesus is much more perceptive than I am. He recognized their trap and confronted them head-on.

He caught them off guard. They assumed that they held the upper hand because they were at dinner in the home of an important Pharisee. They were wrong. They had nothing to say. They remained silent. I guess that they wanted to condemn Jesus but knew that they had no case when Jesus put it into those terms.

Either despite the Pharisees or because of them, Jesus healed the man who was suffering an accumulation of fluid in his body. As an interesting footnote, the Greek word used here is a medical term found nowhere else in the New Testament. This underscores the fact that the author is Luke, the physician.

Jesus knew that the Sabbath laws were established for people to hear God's word. They were not established to prohibit acts of mercy. Jesus' entire ministry was one of answering cries for mercy. His steadfast love and faithfulness are not superseded by the Sabbath law.

With this one act of kindness, Jesus undid the Pharisees' perversion of the Sabbath. Indeed, Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath (Luke 6:1-5). In fact, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27).

The Old Testament Sabbath law prefigured the coming of Christ who is our Sabbath rest. Paul wrote to the Colossian Christians, "Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ" (Colossians 2:16-17). All of the Old Testament ceremonial laws were simply a shadow of the things to come! They are no longer needed because Christ Himself is here.

Our complete and total rest is found in Jesus. He said, "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

Where do you find yourself in the lesson for this week? I began by wondering what it would be like to be in Jesus' shoes. Sometimes we may find ourselves acting like the Pharisees and opposing God's word when we don't like what it says. But, in fact, I think we are all the man with dropsy. We all need mercy and healing from Jesus. That's why He came. That's why He went to the cross. He came to have mercy and heal us from the devastating consequences of our sins.

I pray that we would never find ourselves acting like the Pharisees, trying to find an excuse to avoid showing mercy to those in need. May we be agents of mercy in the world. May we always be ready to help those who are in need.

"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).

L Heavenly Father, You have called us to a place at Your heavenly table. Teach us to treasure this position of honor You have granted to us, and to recognize the honors of this world as momentary.

C Amen.

L Merciful God, You call on us to practice brotherly love, to show hospitality to strangers and to remember all those in need. We come to You confident that You will not leave us nor forsake us, but will grant us all that we need for this body and life. Bestow on us the full riches of Your grace for all the situations and circumstances in which Your people dwell.

C Amen.

L O Lord, grant that marriage would be honored by all in our society. Keep us free from the love of money and give us the grace of contentment 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. Strengthen all those who serve us in the medical field. Give Your comfort and peace to all who are suffering from illness. Be with those who mourn. Grant to them the hope and assurance of a blessed reunion in heaven.

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.

Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing

Lutheran Service Book 924, Lutheran Worship 218, The Lutheran Hymnal 50



1 Lord, dis - miss us with Your bless - ing, Fill our hearts with
2 Thanks we give and ad - o - ra - tion For Your Gos - pel's
3 Sav - ior, when Your love shall call us From our strug - gling



joy and peace; Let us each, Your love pos - sess - ing,
joy - ful sound. May the fruits of Your sal - va - tion
pil - grim way, Let not fear of death ap - pall us,



Tri - umph in re - deem - ing grace. O re - fresh us;
In our hearts and lives a - bound. Ev - er faith - ful,
Glad Your sum - mons to o - bey. May we ev - er,



O re - fresh us, Trav - 'ling through this wil - der - ness.
ev - er faith - ful To Your truth may we be found.
may we ev - er Reign with You in end - less day.

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.

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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 Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

August 29 – September 3, 2022

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 75:1–2, 6, 9; antiphon Psalm 75:7

- L** It is God who executes judgment,
putting down one and lifting up another.
- C** We give thanks to you, O God; we give thanks, for your name is near.
We recount your wondrous deeds.
- L** At the set time that I appoint
I will judge with equity.
- C** For not from the east or from the west
and not from the wilderness comes lifting up,
- L** But I will declare it forever;
I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.
- 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** It is God who executes judgment,
putting down one and lifting up another.

Verse of the Day: Luke 14:11

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia. And he who humbles himself will be exalted. 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.

You may have noticed that the three sections of our Gospel lesson present us with three themes for our meditations this week: Mercy, Humility, and Grace.

Our introit from Psalm 75 relates to the second of these, humility, although it may not be immediately apparent from the verses selected for our introit. Psalm 75:4 states, “I say to the boastful, ‘Do not boast,’ and to the wicked, ‘Do not lift up your horn.’” It appears that Psalm 75 was written when Israel was being assaulted by boastful and unbelieving enemies.

The antiphon from Psalm 75:7 tells us, “It is God who executes judgment.” The boastful and the wicked cannot defy God! He sees into the hearts of all. He knows our motives. They will never withstand the judgment of God.

Sinful pride and human arrogance are shallow. They keep us away from God. The Pharisees of Jesus’ day were poster children for pride and arrogance. They were offended that Jesus welcomed sinners and ate with them.

These haughty Pharisees didn’t believe that they needed forgiveness. They had convinced themselves that they hadn’t sinned and that they were deserving of salvation because of their own righteousness. The tax collectors and sinners did not suffer from this illusion. They flocked to Jesus to receive healing and forgiveness.

Unfortunately, many unbelievers perceive Christians as being boastful and arrogant. Some of us have given them a reason for their conclusions. We ought never to place ourselves over others. Whenever we are tempted to think of ourselves more highly than we ought (Romans 12:3), let us stop and read again what Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:1-9

^{2:1} And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for Your mercy and grace. Give us the true humility of faith to receive the salvation that is ours in Jesus. Grant us to never become haughty or sinfully proud because of our faith. Rather move us to be generous and kind to those who still need to receive the forgiveness won for them by Jesus on the cross. Amen.

Tuesday

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

Verse of the Day: Luke 14:11

L	Alleluia, Alleluia. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, Alleluia.
C	Alleluia, Alleluia. And he who humbles himself will be exalted. 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: O Lord of grace and mercy, teach us by Your Holy Spirit to follow the example of Your Son in true humility, that we may withstand the temptations of the devil and with pure hearts and minds avoid ungodly pride; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
C Amen.

You may have heard someone jokingly say, “I’m proud to be so humble.” Humility like other virtues isn’t so much about what we say rather it is about what we do. Jesus used the example of taking the lowest seat at a wedding reception. This is active humility.

How do we learn to act humbly? Humility begins with what we think. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans, “I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think” (Romans 12:3). This is quite contrary to contemporary pop psychology that praises pride.

True humility lives by the Golden Rule, “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12). True humility recognizes the worth and value of others.

Christians learn true humility from Jesus and His cross. His self-sacrifice for the sins of the world placed every one of us first. He suffered the pangs of hell in our place. This is the essence of humility. Those who call themselves Christians understand the power of humility. May it ever be so among us.

Let us pray: O Lord of grace and mercy, teach us by Your Holy Spirit to follow the example of Your Son in true humility, that we may withstand the temptations of the devil and with pure hearts and minds avoid ungodly pride; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, 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: Luke 14:11

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. And he who humbles himself will be exalted. Alleluia.

Psalms 131

L ¹O LORD, my heart is not lifted up; my eyes are not raised too high;
C I do not occupy myself with things too great and too marvelous for me.
L ²But I have calmed and quieted my soul,
like a weaned child with its mother;
like a weaned child is my soul within me.
C ³O Israel, hope in the LORD from this time forth and forevermore.

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.

Psalm 131 expresses the essence of Biblical humility. The great King David was accustomed to receiving humble petitioners. Now he explains that when he comes to the Lord, he will not raise his eyes.

He knows that God's ways are beyond his meager human comprehension. He is content to trust that God manages all creation in the most marvelous manner.

If fact, he is so happy to let God handle things that he is as calm as a well-fed baby in his mother's arms! We can learn from David not to trust in ourselves and our human wisdom. Rather our hope is in the LORD now and always.

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You that we may humbly approach Your throne of grace and receive Your blessings for every circumstance of life. Grant us faith to place our hope in Your love for us and live calm lives of contentment. Amen.

Thursday

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

Verse of the Day: Luke 14:11

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. And he who humbles himself will be exalted. 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.

Proverbs 25:2–10

²It is the glory of God to conceal things,
but the glory of kings is to search things out.
³As the heavens for height, and the earth for depth,
so the heart of kings is unsearchable.
⁴Take away the dross from the silver,
and the smith has material for a vessel;
⁵take away the wicked from the presence of the king,
and his throne will be established in righteousness.
⁶Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence
or stand in the place of the great,
⁷for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

What your eyes have seen
⁸do not hastily bring into court,
for what will you do in the end,

when your neighbor puts you to shame?
⁹Argue your case with your neighbor himself,
and do not reveal another's secret,
¹⁰lest he who hears you bring shame upon you,
and your ill repute have no end.

These verses from Proverbs are an excellent companion to our Gospel lesson for this week. They underscore Jesus' knowledge of the Old Testament.

Verse 1 of Proverbs 25 tells us that these words come from King Solomon. Although he was the wisest of all and known for the glorious splendor of his palace, he understood the importance of humility. He says in verses 6 and 7:

Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence
or stand in the place of the great,
for it is better to be told, "Come up here,"
than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

People who work in retail have told me appalling stories of rude and pushy customers. It seems that some have chosen this for their strategy in life. I wonder if Solomon ever had to deal with such individuals.

Eventually, those, who think more highly of themselves than they ought, get their comeuppance! Both Jesus and Solomon warn us of that eventuality.

God's people know the futility of rude and arrogant behavior. We have nothing to boast about before our holy, holy, holy, God. We echo the words of Isaiah when he saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up in Isaiah 6. He said, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (Isaiah 6:1-5).

We thank God that He so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son for poor miserable sinners! It is absolutely astounding that the great King of the Universe has said to us "Come up here!" "Join me for eternity in paradise!"

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Grant us the true humility of faith to receive the priceless gift of eternal life through the same 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: Luke 14:11

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia. And he who humbles himself will be exalted. 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.

Hebrews 13:1–17

¹Let brotherly love continue. ²Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. ³Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body. ⁴Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. ⁵Keep your life free from love of money,

and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” ⁶So we can confidently say,

“The Lord is my helper;
I will not fear;
what can man do to me?”

⁷Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. ⁹Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them. ¹⁰We have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat. ¹¹For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the holy places by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp. ¹²So Jesus also suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through his own blood. ¹³Therefore let us go to him outside the camp and bear the reproach he endured. ¹⁴For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. ¹⁵Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. ¹⁶Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

¹⁷Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

As is so often the case, this reading from Hebrews is packed with gems for us to consider. Among these words, there are two particularly precious pearls for us to reflect upon. The first is found in verse 5, “Be content with what you have, for he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’” The second is verse 8, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” I’ll save the second one for tomorrow as we reflect on the first one.

One of the more overlooked themes of the Bible is contentment. Contentment is seldom praised in our society. In both the worlds of business and sports, contentment is not seen as a virtue but as a vice.

These business and sports sayings reveal a lot about the popular view of contentment:

“It’s a dog-eat-dog world.”

“If you are not moving forward, you’re sliding backward.”

“Winning isn’t everything, it’s the only thing,” Vince Lombardi.

“Show me a gracious loser and I’ll show you a failure,” Knute Rockne

“To be satisfied with yourself is a sure sign that your forward motion has stopped.”

“Never let good enough BE enough!”

“Contentment is the enemy of greatness.”

“Happiness is determined by growth, success, and movement in a positive direction, not contentment with the status quo.”

Now let’s look at some quotes from the Bible:

“Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content,”
Philippians 4:11.

“But godliness with contentment is great gain,” 1 Timothy 6:6

“But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content,” 1 Timothy 6:8.

Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.” Luke 3:14

People who believe that their entire future depends on their own personal efforts are not interested in contentment. Those who trust in the Lord, know that their future is in God’s hands. They are equipped to be content. They know the truth of these words, “Be content with what you have, for he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’”

You are not alone. God is always with you. He is always caring for you. No matter what your problems are God is there by your side. He will never leave you nor forsake you!

Let us pray: O Lord, grant me the peace and comfort of contentment that comes from trusting Your promise that you will never leave me nor forsake me. 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: Luke 14:11

L Alleluia, Alleluia. Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, Alleluia.
C **Alleluia, Alleluia. And he who humbles himself will be exalted. 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.

Hebrews 13:7–9

⁷Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. ⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. ⁹Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them.

One of the most important protections against being led astray by diverse and strange teachings is to remember that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Satan and false teachers are constantly challenging our faith with the question, “Did God really say?” To this question, we must always answer, “Yes, He did. He never changes!”

It is always important to remember that the Reformation was not based on new teachings or revelations. The Lutheran Reformation was based on returning to the pure word of God and the teachings of the Apostles. These never change.

I’ve mentioned before that there is a denomination with a marketing slogan that says, “God is still speaking.” To this, we all heartily agree. God is still speaking and He never says anything new or different from what He has always said!

You can always count on Jesus’ promises of salvation because He never changes. He is always true to His word. One of the most comforting of the divine attributes is His changelessness. Malachi 3:6 (KJV) says, “I am the Lord, I change not!” He never changes His mind about sin and forgiveness.

Jesus said, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). This promise is just as true today as the day He said it. You can count on it. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever!

Let us pray: O Lord, thank You for the changelessness of Christ and His promises. Grant that we would always trust your word of sin and grace through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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