

# The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

## July 17, 2022

### Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens

Lutheran Service Book 589, Lutheran Worship 339, The Lutheran Hymnal 296



1 Speak, O Lord, Your ser - vant lis - tens, Let Your Word to  
2 Oh, what bless - ing to be near You And to lis - ten  
3 Lord, Your words are wa - ters liv - ing When my thirst - ing  
4 As I pray, dear Je - sus, hear me; Let Your words in



me come near; New - born life and spir - it give me,  
to Your voice; Let me ev - er love and hear You,  
spir - it pleads. Lord, Your words are bread life - giv - ing;  
me take root. May Your Spir - it e'er be near me



Let each prom - ise still my fear. Death's dread pow'r, its in - ward  
Let Your Word be now my choice! Man - y hard - ened sin - ners,  
On Your words my spir - it feeds. Lord, Your words will be my  
That I bear a - bun - dant fruit. May I dai - ly sing Your



strife, Wars a - gainst Your Word of life; Fill me, Lord, with  
Lord, Flee in ter - ror at Your Word; But to all who  
light Through death's cold and drea - ry night; Yes, they are my  
praise, From my heart glad an - thems raise, Till my high - est



love's strong fer - vor That I cling to You for - ev - er!  
feel sin's bur - den You give words of peace and par - don.  
sword pre - vail - ing And my cup of joy un - fail - ing!  
praise is giv - en In the end - less joy of heav - en.

**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 119:57–60, 64; antiphon Psalm 119:105

**L** Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.

**C** The Lord is my portion;  
I promise to keep your words.

**L** I entreat your favor with all my heart;  
be gracious to me according to your promise.

**C** When I think on my ways,  
I turn my feet to your testimonies;

**L** I hasten and do not delay  
to keep your commandments.

**C** The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love;  
teach me your statutes!

**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** Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.

### 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, grant us the Spirit to hear Your Word and know the one thing needful that by Your Word and Spirit we may live according to Your will; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

### Genesis 18:1–10a

<sup>1</sup>The LORD appeared to [Abraham] by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup>He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth <sup>3</sup>and said, “O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant. <sup>4</sup>Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, <sup>5</sup>while I bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.” So they said, “Do as you have said.” <sup>6</sup>And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, “Quick! Three seahs of fine flour! Knead it, and make cakes.” <sup>7</sup>And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it quickly. <sup>8</sup>Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

<sup>9</sup>They said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” And he said, “She is in the tent.” <sup>10</sup>The LORD said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.”

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

### Gradual Romans 10:15b, 18b; Isaiah 52:7b, alt.

- L** How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news,
- C** who publish peace and bring good news of salvation.
- L** Their voice has gone out to all the earth,
- C** and their words to the ends of the world.

### Psalms 27:7–14

- L** <sup>7</sup>Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!
- C** <sup>8</sup>You have said, “Seek my face.” My heart says to you, “Your face, LORD, do I seek.”
- L** <sup>9</sup>Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!
- C** <sup>10</sup>For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in.
- L** <sup>11</sup>Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.
- C** <sup>12</sup>Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me, and they breathe out violence.
- L** <sup>13</sup>I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!
- C** <sup>14</sup>Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

## Colossians 1:21–29

<sup>21</sup>You, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, <sup>22</sup>he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, <sup>23</sup>if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

<sup>24</sup>Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, <sup>25</sup>of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, <sup>26</sup>the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. <sup>27</sup>To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. <sup>28</sup>Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup>For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

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

**G** Thanks be to God.

## Verse of the Day: Colossians 2:6b–7a

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, Alleluia.

**G** Alleluia, Alleluia. Rooted and built up in him. Alleluia.

## Luke 10:38–42

**L** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter.

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

<sup>38</sup>Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. <sup>39</sup>And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. <sup>40</sup>But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." <sup>41</sup>But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, <sup>42</sup>but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."

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

**G** 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.

## My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Lutheran Service Book 575, Lutheran Worship 368, The Lutheran Hymnal 370



1 My hope is built on noth - ing less Than Je - sus'  
2 When dark - ness veils His love - ly face, I rest on  
3 His oath, His cov - e - nant and blood Sup - port me  
4 When He shall come with trum - pet sound, Oh, may I



blood and righ - teous - ness; No mer - it of my  
His un - chang - ing grace; In ev - 'ry high and  
in the rag - ing flood; When ev - 'ry earth - ly  
then in Him be found, Clothed in His righ - teous -



own I claim But whol - ly lean on Je - sus' name.  
storm - y gale My an - chor holds with - in the veil.  
prop gives way, He then is all my hope and stay.  
ness a - lone, Re - deemed to stand be - fore His throne!

*Refrain*



On Christ, the sol-id rock, I stand; All oth-er ground is sink-ing sand.

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### Devotional thoughts:

“Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her” (KJV).

When my wife, Valerie, graduated from college she needed a car. She had been driving an old Volkswagen Beetle that died on the expressway. She was right in front of a semi barreling down on her when it happened!

It seemed wise for her to find something a bit more dependable. We were engaged to be married at the time, so we began to shop together for a new car.

She purchased a sporty baby blue car with a hatchback. It was perfect for her as a first-year teacher in a strange new town. She used her packing skills to fill it with all of her worldly possessions as she headed down the highway to enlighten third graders in southern Illinois.

I may have been hasty in describing her new car as perfect. It had one significant flaw. The fuel gauge was a bit optimistic. As soon as the needle could smell the “E,” it was out of gas!

As a beginning teacher and then as a young couple, we often didn’t have gas money. We were forever trying to go the extra mile before our next fill-up. Needless to say, this resulted in several adventures as we slowly coasted to the side of the road with only fumes in the tank.

Every road trip requires great deliberation. The route has to be planned. Arrangements must be made for accommodations. The car requires backing. The list goes on. "But one thing is needful." None of these preparations are of value if you have no gas!

Our Gospel lesson for this week is the well-known story of Mary and Martha. Although it appears only in Luke, many Sunday school lessons have been taught and sermons have been preached on this event. I think this is true because it resonates so deeply within each of us.

Martha is faithful. She has a great desire to serve the Lord. This is commendable. She has a house full of guests and chief among them is Jesus Himself! They all need to eat and drink. It is more than she can handle.

As she glances around, there is her sister idly sitting at Jesus' feet. She should be helping with this monumental task.

We've all been there. It's easy to be distracted. Ernest Winter, the former, long-time principal of Christ Lutheran School often said, "We ought not to allow the urgent to overshadow the important."

In all of her busyness, Martha couldn't see the importance of God's word. She was focused on bread and butter issues. But Mary knew what Martha had forgotten. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4 KJV).

Mary had chosen the one thing needful. She had chosen that good part. She had chosen God's word. Everything else passes away but God's word never passes away (Matthew 24:35).

Bread and butter bring life for a time to our bodies. But God's word brings eternal life to our souls. Without it, nothing else matters. The Apostle John explained the importance of God's word this way, "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:31).

Many people have nice homes and automobiles. They dress well. They have good investments. They are busy earning a living. They may be generous. They may volunteer for charity work and community service. But if they do not have God's word in their lives, they are simply jumping into a brand new car with an empty tank. They are going nowhere without God's life-giving word of salvation through faith in Jesus.

On the other hand, you may not have a big house like your friends. Your car may be on its last legs. You may not wear the latest fashions. But if you know Jesus died on the cross for you and gives you eternal life, you have the one thing needful. Do not let it slip away. Sit at Jesus' feet and learn from Him.

God's richest blessings to you in Christ.

"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** Lord God, You have made Your Word fully known in the person of Your Son and in the proclamation of His Gospel. Bring many out of this world and into the communion of Your Church through faith in Jesus to share the riches He has won for us in His death and resurrection.

**C Amen.**

**L** Lord God, You chose Abraham and Sarah, though barren, to bring forth the promised Child. Grant Your heavenly comfort to those without children. Hear and answer their prayers according to Your will.

**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.

### 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.”

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**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 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

#### July 18 – July 23, 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 119:57–60, 64; antiphon Psalm 119:105

- L** Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.
- C** **The Lord is my portion;  
I promise to keep your words.**
- L** I entreat your favor with all my heart;  
be gracious to me according to your promise.
- C** **When I think on my ways,  
I turn my feet to your testimonies;**
- L** I hasten and do not delay  
to keep your commandments.
- C** **The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love;  
teach me your statutes!**
- 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** Your word is a lamp to my feet  
and a light to my path.

## Verse of the Day: Colossians 2:6b–7a

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, Alleluia.  
**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. Rooted and built up in him. 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 this Sunday is dedicated to the importance of God's Word. Mary sat at the Lord's feet and listened to "His Word." (In my opinion, the ESV weakens the text by translating the Greek as Mary listening to "His teaching" but literally she listened to "His word." This is how it is translated in the King James Version.)

Our introit from Psalm 119 is an appropriate choice for this Sunday. It begins and ends with the most well-known verse from Psalm 119 and one of the better known verses in the Bible, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Psalm 119:105).

The author of Psalm 119 is unknown to us but he is in love with God's word! He uses each of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet (Sin and Shin are grouped together) to begin each of the eight verses in the 22 sections of the psalm. As a result, he composed the longest psalm in the Bible. It has 176 verses dedicated to the word of God. If you look carefully, you will notice that in each of the 176 verses, he uses "a noun denoting God's means of communicating with man, such as law, word, precept, testimony, etc."<sup>1</sup>

Those who love God will love His word. It is His only sure way of communicating with us!

It is common in pop culture to encourage people to "follow their heart." But our hearts can be fickle, uncertain, or misleading. We can easily deceive ourselves. The only sure and certain guide for life is God's word. The author of Psalm 119 sought to follow God's word with all his heart.

Does God love you? Are your sins forgiven? If you look into your heart, you may doubt God's love and forgiveness. But if you read God's word, you will know for certain that God loves and forgives you! (1 John 1:8-9 & 1 John 4:10. Read the entire book of 1 John for a more complete assurance of God's love and forgiveness.)

Let us pray: Thank You, Lord, for the gift of Your holy word. Grant that we would never despise preaching and the word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it. Amen.

## Tuesday

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

## Verse of the Day: Colossians 2:6b–7a

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia. As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, Alleluia.  
**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. Rooted and built up in him. Alleluia.

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<sup>1</sup>Walter H. Roehrs and Martin H Franzmann, joint author, *Concordia Self-Study Comentary*, electronic ed., 399 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998, c1979).

## 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, grant us the Spirit to hear Your Word and know the one thing needful that by Your Word and Spirit we may live according to Your will; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**C** Amen.

There is no way to disconnect faith from the word of God. They are inseparable. That is why the opponents of Christianity focus their attacks on God's word.

I attended seminary during a time when God's word was under attack in our church by those who claimed that the Bible is simply a collection of myths. They believed that everything supernatural should be scrubbed from Scripture. This is nothing new. It takes faith to believe that God exists and is interested in humanity so that He acts in miraculous ways.

God's word is attacked in a variety of other ways, too. Most mainline denominations today don't take God's word seriously enough to debate it anymore. They consider the Bible outmoded and biased. It is common for some of them to say, "God is still speaking," meaning God has new things to say that contradict the Bible.

Others believe that their personal experiences or deep-seated feelings trump God's word. They aren't interested in what God says in His word. The list goes on.

This is why our collect for this week is a necessary prayer for Christians. We ask for God's Holy Spirit to grant that we hear His word, believe it, and allow it to guide us. It is God's word that the Spirit uses to bring us to faith and keep us in the faith. It is the power of God's word that makes the sacraments what they are. It is God's word that brings us into a saving relationship with Jesus.

Without God's word, we wouldn't know sin and grace. The law and gospel would be unknown to us. We need God's holy and precious word to know Him and His love for us in Jesus.

Let us pray: O Lord, grant us the Spirit to hear Your Word and know the one thing needful that by Your Word and Spirit we may live according to Your will; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, 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: Colossians 2:6b–7a

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, Alleluia.  
**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. Rooted and built up in him. Alleluia.

## Psalms 27:7–14

**L** <sup>7</sup>Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!  
**C** <sup>8</sup>You have said, "Seek my face." My heart says to you, "Your face, LORD, do I seek."  
**L** <sup>9</sup>Hide not your face from me. Turn not your servant away in anger, O you who have been my help. Cast me not off; forsake me not, O God of my salvation!  
**C** <sup>10</sup>For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the LORD will take me in.  
**L** <sup>11</sup>Teach me your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.  
**C** <sup>12</sup>Give me not up to the will of my adversaries; for false witnesses have risen against me,

**and they breathe out violence.**

**L** <sup>13</sup>I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living!

**C** <sup>14</sup>**Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!**

## 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.**

I've mentioned before that Psalm 27 is one of my favorite psalms. It speaks volumes to anyone suffering from a serious illness or facing surgery. However, today, let's look at it from a different angle.

Verse 8 says, "You have said, 'Seek my face.' My heart says to you, 'Your face, LORD, do I seek.'" God wants us to seek His face. How can we do that? The only sure way to seek God is in His word.

Some want to seek God in nature or discover Him through inward reflection and meditation. These ways of seeking God are dead ends.

God has revealed Himself to us in His word. It is the only sure way to know God. It is through Holy Scripture that we learn of our sin and His love for us in Jesus. It is only in the Bible that we can learn of the resurrection of the dead and eternal life in paradise with Jesus.

If you want to seek God, open the Bible and listen to what He has to say!

Let us pray: O Lord, move us to seek You in Your holy word. Let us never tire of hearing your Word and learning of Your love for us in Christ. Amen.

## Thursday

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

**C** **Amen.**

## Verse of the Day: Colossians 2:6b–7a

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, Alleluia.

**C** **Alleluia, Alleluia. Rooted and built up in him. 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.**

## Genesis 18:1–10a

<sup>1</sup>The LORD appeared to [Abraham] by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the door of his tent in the heat of the day.

<sup>2</sup>He lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing in front of him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth <sup>3</sup>and said, "O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant. <sup>4</sup>Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree, <sup>5</sup>while I bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." <sup>6</sup>And Abraham went quickly into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quick! Three seahs of fine flour! Knead it, and make cakes." <sup>7</sup>And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to a young man, who prepared it quickly. <sup>8</sup>Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them. And he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

<sup>9</sup>They said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” And he said, “She is in the tent.” <sup>10</sup>The LORD said, “I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah your wife shall have a son.”

Genesis 3:15 is the first promise of a savior in the Bible. There we learn that the Savior would come from the seed of the woman. Later we learn that He would also be a descendant of Abraham. For this to happen, God performed a miracle that Sarah and Abraham would have a baby in their old age.

Nothing will ever defeat God’s plans. The old age of Sarah and Abraham won’t. Goliath, the overgrown enemy of David, can’t. Death on the cross can’t.

From beginning to end, the Bible tells us that God wins. His people receive the ultimate victory. But patience is sometimes required. Abraham and Sarah waited for decades for God’s plan to be realized in their lives.

Do not become discouraged because of temporary setbacks in your life. When you are tempted to become downhearted, recall the closing verse of Psalm 27. “Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord” (Psalm 27:14 NIV).

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the ultimate victory that is ours in Jesus. Grant me patience when I am tempted to become discouraged. Remind me again that You always keep Your promises as You did to Abraham and Sarah. Help me take heart and wait for Your deliverance from all trouble and evil 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: Colossians 2:6b–7a

**L** Alleluia, Alleluia. As you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, Alleluia.  
**C** Alleluia, Alleluia. Rooted and built up in him. Alleluia.

## 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.

## Colossians 1:21–29

<sup>21</sup>You, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, <sup>22</sup>he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, <sup>23</sup>if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

<sup>24</sup>Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, <sup>25</sup>of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, <sup>26</sup>the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. <sup>27</sup>To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. <sup>28</sup>Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. <sup>29</sup>For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

Many years ago, I heard a pastor that I respect say, “I’m tired but it’s a good tired.” I have often pondered that statement. At the time, I was very tired, too. There seemed to be no end in sight to the tiredness that I was feeling. On top of that, I didn’t seem to be accomplishing anything.

What did you think of when you read, “I’m tired but it’s a good tired.” I’ve been tired a lot lately but it’s a good tired. I’ve been working hard but at the end of the day, I can see my accomplishments. That’s what I consider a good tired. When I build or repair something, it is easy to see the fruit of my labor. Working in the ministry, it is often much harder to see that anything is being accomplished.

The Apostle Paul wrote, “I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake.” No one likes to suffer but Paul considered his suffering “a good suffering.” He could rejoice in the fruit of his labors as he learned about the faith of the Christians in Colossae. His goal was to “present everyone mature in Christ.” He wrote, “For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.”

As I look back on my ministry in the Church, God has granted me the privilege of seeing that He used me in a small way to advance His kingdom. I didn’t know it at the time but I was experiencing “a good tired.”

May God grant you “a good tired” knowing that nothing we do for the Lord is done in vain.

Prayer: Thank You, Lord, for the feeling of “a good tired.” Grant that we may see the fruit of our labors in Your vineyard. Help us to rejoice when we suffer for the sake of the Gospel 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 Romans 10:8b, 10

**L** The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart,

**C** the word of faith that we proclaim.

**L** For with the heart one believes and is justified,

**C** and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

## Verse of the Day: Colossians 2:6b–7a

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## Luke 10:38–42

<sup>38</sup>Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. <sup>39</sup>And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to his teaching. <sup>40</sup>But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me.” <sup>41</sup>But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, <sup>42</sup>but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her.”

There is always so much to consider in our lessons each week. I often ignore important details for the sake of the main point of our reading.

The main point of this account of Mary and Martha is the importance of attending to the word of God. Mary sat at Jesus' feet listening to the word of God. She had chosen the "one thing needful." Martha was busy with secondary things.

But there is an important detail to this event that I don't want to let pass unnoticed. In Acts 22:3, the Apostle Paul tells us that he had learned at the feet of the rabbi, Gamaliel. On this occasion, Mary is sitting at the feet of the greatest Rabbi of all, Jesus. But here's the rub. Martin Franzmann reports that the rabbis of Jesus' day refused to teach women!<sup>2</sup> Jesus' attitude toward women is totally different from the prevailing mindset of the day. He welcomes them. He teaches Mary at His feet the way Gamaliel had taught Paul without regard to her gender.

It is often falsely claimed that Christianity devalues women. Nothing can be farther from the truth. It is Jesus who values women, men, children, the elderly, tax collectors, and sinners. He died for all. He welcomes us all into His family. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for teaching Mary at Your feet. Let us sit at Your feet and learn of Your love and the gift of eternal life that You won for us on the cross. Amen.

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<sup>2</sup>Walter H. Roehrs and Martin H Franzmann, joint author, *Concordia Self-Study Comentary*, electronic ed., 69 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1998, c1979).