

Everyday FAITH Family Page

New Testament 3

Law/Gospel

In this world I suffer and struggle because of my sin.

Jesus offers comfort, mercy, and grace through faith in Him and gives me eternal riches and blessings.

Bible Words

So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Romans 10:17

Just Joking

What's the best vitamin for a Christian?

Vitamin B1

Jesus Preaches on the Mount

Matthew 5:1–12

Large crowds followed Jesus during His public ministry. Many people brought sick friends and relatives, seeking the healing they heard He provided. Others came out of curiosity. Still others, including many religious teachers, came to see if Jesus was the Messiah.

Scripture often reports that Jesus tried to leave the crowds to pray or spend time with His disciples. In one instance, Jesus went up a mountain and sat down to teach. The Twelve, those He chose as His students, went to Him. There, Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount to His disciples.

The Beatitudes are the first part of these teachings. These nine “blessed” statements use a Greek word for “blessed” that means more than “happy.” It means “saved” and “redeemed.”

Jesus redeemed us by paying the price for our sin with His death on the cross. He conquered death when He rose from the dead. In these redemptive acts, Jesus offers forgiveness of sin and new life with Him.

Spoken to those who are believers, Jesus’ “blessed” statements offer the kingdom of heaven to humble, poor in spirit people who mourn over their sin, and hunger and thirst for righteousness. His redeemed people receive comfort, satisfaction, mercy, and adoption as children of God.

Read the Beatitudes with the eyes of a believer, knowing Christ is talking to you.

Jesus’ Authority as God’s Son

Although Jesus taught His disciples on the mountain, the crowds apparently drew close and listened in. After He finished teaching, the crowd was astonished because He taught with authority, unlike their Scribes (Matthew 7:28).

This authority came from God the Father. Jesus said, “I have not spoken on My own authority, but the Father who sent Me has Himself given Me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told Me” (John 12:49–50).

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Law/Gospel

I worry about my life because I depend on myself instead of on God. **Jesus, who provided for my greatest need by paying for my sins on the cross, describes the Father's care for creation to show me His love and take away my worry.**

Bible Words

And those who know Your name put their trust in You, for You, O LORD, have not forsaken those who seek You.

Psalms 9:10

Fun Facts

Jesus compared God's care for us to His care of birds and lilies. Beautiful lilies grow in Israel. God considers us even more valuable than these beautiful lilies and cares for us!

The blue desert lily grows wild and blooms in the late spring. The Madonna Lily once grew abundantly in Upper Galilee, but now is quite rare. Also blooming in the late spring, this is the Easter lily used in many Christian churches. It reminds us of the trumpets that announce the news that Christ rose from the dead.

Jesus Teaches Us to Trust

Matthew 6:25–34

Today's lesson on trust comes from another section of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus spoke to His twelve disciples and people from the crowd listened in.

These verses are among the most comforting words Jesus spoke:

Do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. . . .

If God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious. . . . Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you (vv. 25, 30–33).

There's not a person alive who hasn't worried about these or other needs at one time or another. Yet Jesus assured us that our heavenly Father knows what we need and provides it. The Lord works to provide for us in many ways, including people living out their vocations in the world.

May the Holy Spirit open your eyes so that you can see, perceive, and trust God's care for you. May the Spirit give you a heart that believes in Jesus, our Savior, who freely offers the kingdom of God to us.

God Keeps His Promises

Although we may find it difficult to trust God to provide for us, we can examine the reliability of His Word. In Jesus, God fulfilled all the promises He made to His Old Testament people. St. Paul said, "All the promises of God find their Yes in Him" (2 Corinthians 1:20).

Paul also said, "If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:31–32).

The Lord invites us to trust Him. He keeps His Word. His promises are true. May you always see and understand His grace and provision for you!

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My sin troubles and harms me, condemning me to eternal death. **God offers His love and forgiveness to me and all sinners who call upon Him for mercy and grants me His peace.**

Bible Words

And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."
Luke 7:50

Fun Fact

In Bible times, eating a meal together showed friendship and commitment that obliged each person to protect and serve the other and avoid betrayals.

People commonly greeted one another with hearty hugs, a kiss on each cheek, and a greeting such as "peace to you" or "the Lord bless you." Likewise, a good-bye was drawn out with many hugs, kisses, and blessings.

Jesus Is Anointed

Luke 7:36–50

Middle Easterners are known for their hospitality. In Bible times, a host welcomed a guest with a kiss, a meal, and a promise of protection.

As a sign of acceptance, welcome, and honor, a host provided water to wash feet made grimy by walking dusty roads in sandals. A servant usually provided this service for guests. Failure to provide such hospitality was an insult or a sign of hostility.

A Pharisee named Simon offered none of these hospitalities when He invited Jesus to dinner. Curiosity or social pressure may have prompted the invitation, but Simon's lack of hospitality showed his real feelings.

During the meal, a woman described as a sinner crashed the party. Standing behind Jesus, she wept, washed Jesus' feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and anointed them with ointment.

Simon felt horrified. How dare a woman with publicly known sin come to his home! Simon thought, "If Jesus was a prophet, He'd know what kind of woman is touching Him." Jesus perceived his thoughts. He asked Simon who would love a moneylender more if he forgave their debt, one who owed five hundred denarii or one who owed fifty denarii?

When Simon answered the one who owed more, Jesus confronted his lack of hospitality. He said the woman, whose many sins were forgiven, loved much. The one who is forgiven little, loves little.

With faith and thankfulness, the woman braved a hostile environment to thank her Lord with loving service. Publicly, Jesus forgave the woman's sins. "Your faith has saved you," He said. "Go in peace."

Sing

What a friend we have in Jesus, / All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry / Ev'rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit; / Oh, what needless pain we bear—
All because we do not carry, / Ev'rything to God in prayer!

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus," *Lutheran Service Book* 770, stanza 1

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Like the disciples, my faith is weak, and I lack trust in God to give me all good things. **For the sake of His Son, Jesus, God promises to provide for all my needs and gives me the gift of faith to believe in Jesus as my Savior and receive eternal life through Him.**

Bible Words

Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to Me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst."

John 6:35

Fun Fact

Jesus did this miracle near the Sea of Galilee. Although Jesus grew up about twenty miles away in Nazareth, much of His ministry happened around this sea.

Capernaum on the sea's northern edge became His home base. Peter and Andrew, fishermen and two of Jesus' first disciples, lived there. Two other disciples, James and John also fished these waters with their father.

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand

John 6:1–14

Many children cite the feeding of 5,000 as their favorite miracle of Jesus, perhaps because Jesus miraculously multiplied the lunch of a small boy, two fish and five barley loaves, to feed the crowd.

This miracle is even more amazing when you consider that 5,000 counted only men in the crowd. When you add women and children, Bible scholars estimate that Jesus fed 15,000 to 20,000 people that day.

Afterwards, even bigger crowds followed Jesus, hoping for a handout. Jesus told them to seek salvation through Him, not food for their bellies. He didn't come to be a bread king. Rather, Jesus said He is the bread of life, who gives salvation to those who believe in Him (see Bible Words at left). Many considered this a "hard saying" (a difficult teaching) and abandoned Him (John 6:60, 66).

We find great meaning for Jesus' words in the Lord's Supper, where we consume "the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine" (The Sacrament of the Altar, Luther's Small Catechism). In this Sacrament, we receive the forgiveness of sins and all other blessings for life and salvation. Christ's body and blood strengthen us to live as His people.

The Purpose of Jesus' Miracles

Only God can do miracles, extraordinary events we cannot explain in human terms. Miracles show God at work.

Jesus' miracles were signs that showed He is true God and the promised, long-awaited Messiah. The miracles showed He has complete authority and power in heaven and on earth.

With compassion and love for the people, Jesus healed many and restored health and life. In love, Jesus healed all who believed in Him from the sicknesses of sin and death and defeated the devil when He died on the cross and rose from the dead.

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As a sinner, I tremble at the sound of God's voice, for I deserve punishment and am unworthy to see Him face-to-face.

As God's child, I have nothing to fear, for in His Word and Sacraments, Jesus gives me pardon and peace through His death and resurrection, making me worthy to stand face-to-face with God my Father.

Bible Words

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

Fun Facts

Although the precise mountain where the Transfiguration occurred cannot be identified, many think that it was probably Mount Hermon, near Caesarea Philippi where Jesus and His disciples were when Peter confessed his faith. Mount Hermon rises 9,232 feet above sea level. Some suggest Mount Tabor as another site. Near the Sea of Galilee, it stands 1,929 feet high.

The Transfiguration

Matthew 17:1–9

Soon after Simon Peter publicly confessed Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of God,” Jesus pulled aside three close disciples to go up a mountain with Him. There, before their eyes, Jesus transformed. His glory as the Son of God made His clothes shine with heavenly brightness.

Then, Moses and Elijah appeared and talked to Jesus. Luke reports that they spoke about Jesus' departure, literally His exodus from Jerusalem after He suffered, died, and rose from the dead (Luke 9:31).

Wanting to stay on the mountain, Peter suggested making three tents for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. A voice from a cloud interrupted him. It said “This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him (Matthew 17:5).

The disciples fell on their faces. Jesus came and touched them and told them not to be afraid. When they looked up, they saw only Jesus.

Jesus told the three men not to tell anyone what they saw until after He rose from the dead.

Why did Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus?

At the end of the Book of Luke, Jesus said, “These are My words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled” (24:44).

Moses and Elijah symbolize the Law and the Prophets.

As the Old Testament leader of the Israelites, Moses received the Ten Commandments, the Law, from God. He wrote the first five books of the Bible, which are sometimes referred to as “the Law.”

God's Old Testament prophets spoke His Word to the people. Elijah was the prophet when God sent fire to Mount Carmel to miraculously burn a drenched sacrifice and shame the prophets of Baal.

Moses and Elijah appeared with Jesus in order to show that the fullness of the God dwelt in bodily form in Christ (Colossians 1:19). He fulfilled the whole Old Testament.

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I sin when I see my calling, or vocation, as unrelated to my Lord and my faith. **God, in His mercy, uses all vocations to meet the needs of the world. In His Son, Jesus, He provides for my spiritual needs through pastors, Christian parents, and others, and He equips me to share His love with others.**

Bible Words

For 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

Fun Facts

Manuscript copies of the Greek Gospel of Luke list different numbers in this report. Some translations count seventy-two disciples, as the ESV does; others say seventy. According to Martin H. Franzmann, "The number 70 (or 72) is the traditional number of the non-Jewish peoples in the world. . . . The choice of this number indicates the ultimate universality of Jesus' saving mission."

Concordia Self-Study Commentary: New Testament, p. 68

Jesus Sends the Seventy-Two

Luke 10:1–24

Do you sometimes feel confused by the words *disciples* and *apostles*? Which are we? Let's try to clarify.

A *disciple* is a follower. In the Bible, this word describes people who follow Jesus. Those who believed in Jesus in the Early Church and Christians throughout the ages, including us, are disciples of Jesus through God's gift of faith, which comes through His Word and Sacraments.

Apostle means "messenger" or "sent one." The Bible uses this term most often to refer to the twelve disciples Jesus selected during His early ministry, "whom He also named apostles" (Mark 3:14).

Jesus sent seventy-two disciples on a mission in Luke 10. He also sent the twelve apostles on a mission in Matthew 10. All are disciples; only some are apostles.

The seventy-two returned a good report for Jesus, who rejoiced with them. He said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (Luke 10:2).

We thank God for parents who teach their children about Jesus. We thank Him for pastors, teachers, musicians, and other leaders who work diligently to preach and teach God's Word faithfully and bring in the harvest. All of Jesus' disciples are part of this effort. May the Lord give you much joy in your work and service to Him!

Song

Today Your mercy calls us / To wash away our sin.
However great our trespass, / Whatever we have been,
However long from mercy / Our hearts have turned away,
Your precious blood can wash us / And makes us clean today.

"Today Your Mercy Calls Us," Lutheran Service Book 915, stanza 1

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God's command to love my neighbor is a command to be perfectly compassionate to everyone I meet. **Though I fall short, Jesus is the Good Samaritan, who binds up my brokenness, forgives my sin, and restores me to eternal life.**

Bible Words

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.
Mark 10:45

Fun Facts

"Son of Man" is a phrase used only by Jesus in the New Testament and only to refer to Himself. Faithful Jewish people recognized this messianic language from the Old Testament.

Amen literally means "so be it." In more modern language, we might say "Yes!" or "We agree!"

The Good Samaritan

Luke 10:25–37

The region of Samaria sits between Galilee on the north and Judea on the south. Samaria's history shaped its culture and national relationships.

When the Northern Kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC, foreigners came to the land. The remaining Jews married them. The people mixed worship of the one true God with idol worship. The people of this area became known as Samaritans.

After the Babylonian Exile of Judea in 605 to 587 BC, Cyrus, the new Babylonian king, allowed the Jews to return to Judea. Animosity developed between faithful, returning Jews and the "half-blood" Samaritans, who did not worship the one true God.

The Jews shunned Samaritans and treated them as outcasts. When Galileans traveled to Jerusalem for festivals several times a year, they even walked around instead of through Samaria.

Although aware of the negative views of Samaritans, Jesus did not share them. Jesus welcomed Samaritans into His kingdom. He purposely traveled through Samaria. In a memorable parable studied today, He made a good Samaritan a model of kindness and compassion and showed a priest and a Levite as failures.

Read this parable in Luke 10 and rejoice that Jesus, our Lord, showed mercy to us even though sin made us outcasts.

For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. (Romans 5:10–11)

Words of Absolution (forgiveness of sins)

In worship, we confess our sins together and hear God's forgiveness from the pastor, who says: "Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." And all God's people say "Amen!"

Lutheran Service Book, p. 151

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Because of sin, I face physical and spiritual danger in this world. **Jesus, my Good Shepherd, guards and protects me from sin, death, and the power of the devil, feeding me through His Word and Sacraments to keep my faith strong.**

Bible Words

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know My own and My own know Me."
John 10:11, 14

Pharisees

Pharisees followed God's Law very closely, especially the oral traditions not written in the Torah. They believed their strict obedience made them righteous. Serious scholars, they spent a lot of time reading and interpreting the Law. They were the first to point out the sins of others with pious self-righteousness. They were not baptized by John and felt threatened by Jesus and His teachings. Luke 7:29–30 says the Pharisees rejected God's purpose for them by not receiving John's Baptism. They were involved in arresting and killing Jesus.

The Good Shepherd

John 10:1–18

For people unaccustomed to the ways of farming and animal care, the Bible may sometimes seem confusing. Jesus used many agricultural images in parables and teaching. His teaching of the Good Shepherd is an image to understand and cherish.

When Jesus spoke about the Good Shepherd, he was talking with the Pharisees, popular religious teachers of the day. Allegories about good and bad shepherds were familiar, everyday images the Pharisees understood.

The life of a shepherd was not easy. Shepherds often cared for sheep in wilderness areas, separated from other people. They led their sheep to good pastures and still waters every day. (A fast, rushing current could sweep sheep away to drown.)

Shepherds sheltered their sheep in a sheepfold, an area encased by a rock wall with a door and a roof over part of it. Sometimes they used caves. Shepherds called sheep by name as they passed into the fold. At night, the shepherd slept at the door or watched over the sheep from the top of the wall or the roof.

A shepherd's equipment included a staff, a long pole with a hook on the end. With this, the shepherd climbed steep hillsides and guided and rescued endangered sheep. He also carried a rod, a club about two feet long, as a weapon against thieves and dangerous animals. Shepherds often carried a horn of oil to heal wounds and a reed pipe to play calming music.

So, when Jesus said He was the Good Shepherd, He meant that He cares for and protects His sheep. When He said His sheep listen to His voice, He meant we know Him, follow Him, trust Him, and hear His voice in His Word.

When Jesus said the hired hand flees from a wolf, but the Good Shepherd protects His sheep, He spoke about protecting us. When He said there is one flock and one shepherd, He referred to those who believe in Him as the Christ, our Savior, who died for our sin and rose from the dead to give us new life.

Read Psalm 23 to gain new insight on our Lord and Good Shepherd.

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I sin by not trusting God and failing to pray to Him for all things. **God promises to hear and answer my prayers because of His Son, Jesus, and to do what is best and good for me.**

Bible Words

This is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us.

1 John 5:14

Sing

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

*"What a Friend We Have in Jesus,"
Lutheran Service Book 770, stanza 2*

Evening Prayer

I thank You, my heavenly Father,
through Jesus Christ, Your dear
Son, that You have graciously
kept me this day; and I pray that
You would forgive me all my sins
where I have done wrong, and
graciously keep me this night.
For into Your hands I commend
myself, my body and soul, and
all things. Let Your holy angel be
with me, that the evil foe may
have no power over me. Amen.

Luther's Small Catechism

Jesus Teaches Us to Pray

Luke 11:1–13; John 16:23–33

Children learned about the Lord's Prayer in Sunday School today. Jesus taught this prayer to His disciples. This is a perfect time to reinforce the prayer at home and help children memorize it.

Choose a time of day to say the prayer together, such as before or after meals or before going to sleep. Say one phrase at a time and ask your children to repeat it. Soon, they'll be able to say the prayer anytime, including during worship. What a wonderful way for them to participate in the worship service!

Try these phrases: 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.

Teaching Children to Pray

Teaching children to pray to their heavenly Father is a privilege that opens a way for them to express their faith. Teach memorized prayers, such as meal prayers or morning and evening prayers (see Section 2, Luther's Small Catechism). Include song prayers; music helps us remember better.

Encourage children to use their own words by asking them to complete sentence stems, such as "Thank You, Jesus, for . . ." or "Jesus, forgive me for . . ." or "Jesus, please help me . . ." Teach them to close "in Jesus' name" because Jesus promised to answer prayers in His name (John 16:23).

Say different meal prayers for variety. Let a different person start and lead the prayer each time. Here are a couple of prayers to consider.

1. We thank You for this food before us. / We thank You for the One who saved us. / We thank You for the folks who help us. / And thank You for the life You gave us. / In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.
2. Sing this prayer to the tune of "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" (LSB 457):
Come Lord Jesus be our guest! Alleluia! / Let these gifts to us be blessed!
Alleluia! / God is great and God is good. Alleluia!
Let us thank Him for our food! Alleluia! / Amen!

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Law/Gospel

In this life, I see and experience the effects of sin: sickness, injury, and death. **Jesus, who is the source of all life, will raise me and all who believe in Him to life with Him forever, where there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain.**

Bible Words

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die."
John 11:25–26

Fun Facts

The Bible says Jesus loved adult siblings Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, who lived together in Bethany, a small town two miles from Jerusalem (John 11:5, 36).
Jesus may have stayed with them when He came to Jerusalem for religious festivals, including the last Passover before His death and resurrection (Mark 11:1).

Jesus Raises Lazarus

John 11:1–45

Death, the result of sin in our world, is our enemy (Romans 6:23). God does not want any person to perish, but instead "desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4). God promises the gift of eternal life to all who trust in His Son, Jesus, for forgiveness and salvation.

Mary and Martha expressed belief in this eternal life when they spoke with Jesus after their brother, Lazarus, died. Jesus promised eternal life for all believers (see Bible Words at left).

Yet Jesus felt very sad when He saw the sisters' grief. Jesus loved these three siblings and worked an incredible miracle when He raised Lazarus from the dead after four days in the tomb. Jesus promises this same miracle, a resurrected body, for all people on the Last Day.

Like Mary and Martha, we feel incredibly sad when loved ones die. We miss them and don't want to live without them. But heaven awaits those who believe in Jesus, and we'll see our loved ones again (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18). God knows our sorrow. He blesses and comforts all who mourn (Matthew 5:4).

Burial Customs

New Testament era customs required families to bury a dead person on the day he or she died. Caring for the body, staying with the body, and mourning with the family were considered honorable deeds. In some cases, people hired professional mourners to ensure noticeable mourning.

Families maintained communal burial sites and buried loved ones with their ancestors. Loved ones prepared a body for burial, wrapped it in burial cloths, and sealed it in a tomb. Sometimes carved out of stone, tombs stood outside city walls.

Mourners displayed sadness in appearance and dress. They wore no jewelry and often tore their clothing. Men shaved their heads.

We mourn in similar ways today, yet with hope in Christ and the resurrection of the dead.

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Because of my sin, I am lost from God. **My heavenly Father does not abandon me, but seeks me out through His Word and Sacraments, forgives me completely for Jesus' sake, and keeps me safe in faith.**

Bible Words

The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.
Luke 19:10

Just Joking

What famous character from Jesus' parables hit a home run?
The prodigal son, who came home.

Sing

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our
refuge—
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake
thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In His arms He'll take and shield
thee;
Thou wilt find a solace there.

*"What a Friend We Have in Jesus,"
Lutheran Service Book 770, stanza 3*

Jesus Seeks the Lost

Luke 15

Tax collectors and sinners often came to Jesus. Offended, the religious teachers confronted Jesus. Welcoming sinners was not right, they insisted. One day, when the teachers again voiced their concerns, Jesus told three parables about lost things.

First, Jesus told about a shepherd who left ninety-nine sheep to look for one lost sheep. When he found the sheep, He called his friends and neighbors to rejoice with him. Jesus said, "There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (v. 7).

Jesus' second parable told of a woman who lost one of ten silver coins. When she found it, she called her friends and neighbors to celebrate. Again, Jesus spoke of heaven's joy over a repentant sinner.

The third parable told about a father and two sons. The younger son made a shocking request for his inheritance. In a way, the son wished his father dead so he could have his money, but the father did as asked.

The younger son recklessly squandered his inheritance and ended up tending pigs, an unclean animal to the Jews. Out of options, he decided to go home and ask to be his father's servant.

Before the son could utter an apology, the father ran to him and kissed and hugged him. The father gave the son gifts to welcome him back to the family: a robe, a ring, and shoes. He ordered a celebration.

The older son heard the music and came home to investigate. A servant told him his wayward brother was home and how his father received him with joy. Angry, the older son refused to join the party. The father came out and begged him to come in, but the son refused.

This time, Jesus did not finish the story. He left an opening for the religious teachers, represented by the older son, to repent of their sinfulness, arrogance, and self-righteousness. They needed a Savior, but they rejected Jesus and His love. Secure in their religious knowledge and outward actions, these leaders became lost themselves.

Jesus, our Lord, still seeks and saves lost sinners. May He find you, forgive you, surround you with His grace, and bring you safely home.

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Sin brought sickness and death into the world. **In His death and resurrection, Jesus heals me from the sickness of sin and overcomes death for me.**

Bible Words

Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved.

Jeremiah 17:14

How can water do such great things?

Certainly not just water, but the word of God in and with the water does these things, along with the faith which trusts this word of God in the water. For without God's word the water is plain water and no Baptism. But with the word of God it is a Baptism, that is, a life-giving water, rich in grace, and a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit as St. Paul says in Titus, chapter 3: "He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying." (Titus 3:5-8)

Luther's Small Catechism

Jesus Heals Ten Lepers

Luke 17:11-19

A ceremonial cleansing or washing was required when a person broke certain Jewish laws. Some situations require cleansing by immersing the body completely in water to atone for a sin.

A person healed from leprosy had to present his or her cured body to a priest for examination. If the priest confirmed the healing, the person washed in a cleansing ritual prescribed by the priest.

One day, Jesus encountered ten lepers who asked for His mercy. Jesus told them to go and show themselves to a priest. Healed on the way, nine hurried to the priest to receive cleansing. The tenth, a Samaritan, returned and thanked Jesus. Samaritans, enemies of the Jews, did not usually worship the true God, but this man received the gift of faith. Jesus said, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well" (v. 19).

Today, Christians practice a ceremonial cleansing in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Unlike previous washings that were repeated often, we celebrate Holy Baptism only once in a person's life. Born in sin, we cannot save ourselves. Baptized into Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection, we die, are buried, and rise with Him (Romans 6:1-14).

Baptism washes away our sins and gives us the Holy Spirit, who kindles faith in Jesus. With this faith, God gifts us with forgiveness of sin, new life, and salvation in Christ, our Savior.

Medical Care in Bible Times

People in Bible times suffered with tumors, fevers, seizures, paralysis, blindness, and a wide variety of skin diseases, including leprosy.

Doctors or physicians offered care, but they were unable to help many people. Some of their practices actually increased suffering.

Antibiotics for infections did not exist. Instead, people used certain plants, oils, wine, and other natural substances as medicine. People with arthritis, rheumatism, or other aches and pains found relief in warm springs near the Dead Sea.

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Everyday FAITH Family Page

New Testament 3

Law/Gospel

In my sinful foolishness, I prize self-sufficiency and believe I can take care of myself, looking to the things of this world to satisfy and save me. **God knows that I am like a helpless child who can do nothing to save myself. In His love, He provides all that I need for this body and life, working salvation for me through His Son.**

Bible Words

Jesus said, "Let the children come to Me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God."

Mark 10:14

Fun Fact

We think of the kingdom of God, where Christ rules, in three ways:

1. **A kingdom of power.** As divine Creator, Christ rules all creation and all creatures by His almighty power. This kingdom includes all people, believers and unbelievers.
2. **Kingdom of grace.** Christ's Church on earth includes all believers who serve Him because of God's gift of faith. We call it the Church Militant.
3. **Kingdom of glory.** Christ rules the Church Triumphant, all Christians who have died (saints) and the angels in heaven.

Jesus Blesses the Little Children

Mark 10:13–16

Welcome Little Ones

Jesus and His disciples returned to a house after a full day. Discussion of the day's events and the disciples' questions followed.

Unexpected company arrived, people with children who wanted Jesus to bless them. The disciples rebuked them, probably trying to protect their Lord. When Jesus heard this, He was indignant. He said to let the children in, took them in His arms, and blessed them.

Using this teachable moment, Jesus continued, "Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it" (v. 15). *Paidion*, the Greek word translated as "children," literally means "infants, little ones." This is one of the many reasons the Church baptizes infants.

The kingdom of God belongs to those who recognize their inability to enter it by their own strength or works. We come to the Lord through the mercy of God, and receive Him by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8–9).

"Kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" describe God's rule in people's hearts through the Holy Spirit. Jesus' spiritual kingdom results from the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation through Him. It is not an earthly kingdom like Kings Herod or David had.

The Third Article of the Apostles' Creed

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.

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ. This is most certainly true.

Luther's Small Catechism

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