

The Congregation at Prayer  
The Whole Story

2025

A Daily Devotional  
St. Paul LCMS, Ida Grove, IA



**Week #27-The Whole Story**  
**4<sup>th</sup> Week after Trinity**  
July 13-July 20, 2025

**Start Every Day**

*"In the Name of the Father, and + of the Son, and  
of the Holy Spirit. Amen"*

recite **APOSTLE'S CREED**

Read **Catechism—The Athanasian Creed: Part 2**

So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God;

And yet there are not three Gods, but one God.

So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord;

And yet there are not three Lords, but one Lord.

Just as we are compelled by the Christian truth to acknowledge each distinct person as God and Lord,

So also are we prohibited by the catholic religion to say that there are three Gods or Lords.

The Father is not made nor created nor begotten by anyone.

The Son is neither made nor created, but begotten of the Father alone.

The Holy Spirit is of the Father and of the Son, neither made nor created nor begotten, but proceeding.

Thus, there is one Father, not three Fathers; one Son, not three Sons; one Holy Spirit, not three Holy Spirits.

And in this Trinity none is before or after another; none is greater or less than another;

But the whole three persons are coeternal

# Prayer Requests



with each other and coequal, so that in all things, as has been stated above, the Trinity in Unity and Unity in Trinity is to be worshiped.

Therefore, whoever desires to be saved must think thus about the Trinity.

VERSE: Romans 10:9-10 ***“If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”***

## **PRAYER of the WORD**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, without Your help our labor is useless, and without Your light our search is in vain. Invigorate our study of Your holy Word that, by due diligence and right discernment, we may establish ourselves and others in Your holy faith; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## **Sunday, July 13**

- Read **Proverbs 11**
- Read **Wisdom Book: Ecclesiastes 1-3**

GREGORY OF NYSSA: (Ecclesiastes 1:11) If they are swallowed up in oblivion, do not wonder because the present will suffer the same fate. Because nature tends towards evil, we are forgetful of the good; but when enjoyment of the good returns, oblivion envelopes evil. We have no remembrance

of the first and last things which is as though he said that the events which introduced evil after man's original blessed state will erase the memory the last things. No such memory will exist in the future; the last state [*hē eschatē katastasis*] will utterly destroy the memory of evil deeds in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. HOMILIES ON ECCLESIASTES 1.<sup>1</sup>

### **Monday, July 14**

- Read **Proverbs 12**
- Read **Wisdom Book: Ecclesiastes 4-6**

AMBROSE: (Ecclesiastes 4:5) Let one who still doubts hear the testimony of the Gospel, for the Son of God said, "We have played for you, and you have not danced." The Jews who did not dance and knew not how to clap their hands were abandoned, but the Gentiles were called and applauded God in spirit. "The fool folds his hands together and eats his own flesh," that is, he becomes involved in the concerns of the body and eats his own flesh, just as does all-powerful death. And such a one will not find eternal life. But the wise person who lifts up his works that they may shine before his Father who is in heaven has not consumed his flesh; instead, he has raised it to the grace of the resurrection. This is the wise person's honorable

- 3 Cure Your children's warring madness;  
Bend our pride to Your control;  
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness,  
Rich in things and poor in soul.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
Lest we miss Your kingdom's goal,  
Lest we miss Your kingdom's goal.
- 4 Save us from weak resignation  
To the evils we deplore;  
Let the gift of Your salvation  
Be our glory evermore.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
Serving You whom we adore,  
Serving You whom we adore.

Text: Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1878–1969  
Text: Public domain

---

<sup>1</sup> Wright, J. Robert, ed. 2005. [Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

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.

### **Luther's Evening Prayer**

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

### **850 God of Grace and God of Glory**

- 1 God of grace and God of glory,  
On Your people pour Your pow'r;  
Crown Your ancient Church's story;  
Bring its bud to glorious flow'r.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
For the facing of this hour,  
For the facing of this hour.
- 2 Lo, the hosts of evil round us  
Scorn the Christ, assail His ways!  
From the fears that long have bound us  
Free our hearts to faith and praise.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
For the living of these days,  
For the living of these days.

dance which David danced, mounting by the loftiness of his spiritual dance to the throne of Christ that he may see and hear the Lord saying to his Lord, "Sit at my right hand." LETTER 28, TO BISHOP SABINUS.<sup>2</sup>

### **Tuesday, July 15**

- Read **Proverbs 13**
- Read **Wisdom Book: Ecclesiastes 7-9**

ATHANASIUS: (Ecclesiastes 9:12) Now as these things are written in the Scriptures, the case is clear, that the saints know that a certain time is measured to every person, but that no one knows the end of that time is plainly intimated by the words of David, "Declare unto me the shortness of my days." What he did not know, that he desired to be informed of. Accordingly the rich man also, while he thought that he had yet a long time to live, heard the words, "You fool, this night your soul shall be required of you: then whose shall those things be which you have provided?"<sup>31</sup> And the Preacher speaks confidently in the Holy Spirit, and says, "Man also knows not his time." Wherefore the patriarch Isaac said to his son Esau, "Behold, I am old, and I know not the day of my death." Our Lord, therefore, although as God and the Word of the Father, both knew the time measured out by

---

<sup>2</sup> Wright, J. Robert, ed. 2005. [\*Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon\*](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

him to all and was conscious of the time for suffering, which he himself had appointed also to his own body. Yet since he was made man for our sakes, he hid himself when he was sought after before that time came, as we do; when he was persecuted, he fled; and avoiding the designs of his enemies he passed by, and “so went through the midst of them.”<sup>33</sup> But when he had brought on that time which he himself had appointed, at which he desired to suffer in the body for all men, he announces it to the Father, saying, “Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son.” And then he no longer hid himself from those who sought him but stood willing to be taken by them; for the Scripture says, he said to them that came unto him, “Whom do you seek?” And when they answered, “Jesus of Nazareth,” he said unto them, “I am he whom you seek.”<sup>35</sup> DEFENSE OF HIS FLIGHT 15.<sup>3</sup>

### **Wednesday, July 16**

- Read **Proverbs 14**
- Read **Wisdom Book: Ecclesiastes 10-12**

AUGUSTINE: (Ecclesiastes 11:2) Before the Lord’s resurrection there was rest for the departed but resurrection for none: “Rising from the dead he dies no more, death has no more dominion over him.” But after such resurrection had taken place in

---

<sup>3</sup> Wright, J. Robert, ed. 2005. [Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

miserable fate he prefigures the fall of the people of Abraham, those who could see “the bread” of life “descended from heaven” to them but in large number were not worthy of enjoying that vivifying abundance, even though, at the same time, it was abundantly given to all those who asked for it through the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ. ON THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS 7:1.<sup>7</sup>

### **Sunday, July 20**

- Read **Proverbs 18**
- Read **History Book: 2 Kings 10-12**

### **End Every Day**

#### **Pray the *Collect for 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity***

O Lord, grant that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Your governance that Your Church may joyfully serve You in all godly quietness; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

### **Personal Prayers**

pray **LORD’S PRAYER**

### **Luther’s Morning Prayer**

---

<sup>7</sup> Conti, Marco, and Gianluca Pilara, eds. 2008. [1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

that of the body, might represent in his own person the purification of all the nations through the bath of regeneration, whose beginning was in the river Jordan, the mother and originator of baptism. ON THE SECOND BOOK OF KINGS 5:10–11.<sup>6</sup>

### **Saturday, July 19**

- Read **Proverbs 17**
- Read **History Book: 2 Kings 7-9**

EPHREM THE SYRIAN: (2 Kings 7:2) Elisha said, “Tomorrow there will be relief from the siege and the famine in the city of Samaria.” But an officer of the house of king Jehoram mocked these words and derided the word [of the prophet]. Elisha answered him what the Scripture relates here. Some say that this man was the one whose story is reported by the biblical text above. He had sent to Elisha a messenger or a captain of the guard [of the king] to arrest him or to kill him but later had repented of his evil scheme and had run after him, preventing him from executing his command. This poor man, therefore, had seen the delivery of the town and the consequent abundance of which he had not profited, because on that same day the inhabitants of the city, who were coming out to plunder, had trampled him, and he had died. In his

---

<sup>6</sup> Conti, Marco, and Gianluca Pilara, eds. 2008. [1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

the Lord’s body, so that the head of the church might foreshadow what the body of the church hopes for at the end, then the Lord’s day—that is the eighth, which is also the first—began to be observed. LETTER 55.<sup>4</sup>

### **Thursday, July 17**

- Read **Proverbs 15**
- Read **History Book: 2 Kings 1-3**

AUGUSTINE: (2 Kings 2:8-9) Therefore, he who is everywhere does not dwell in all, and he does not even dwell equally in those in whom he does dwell. Otherwise, what is the meaning of the request made by Elisha that there might be in him double the Spirit of God that was in Elijah? And how is it that among the saints some are more holy than others, except that they have a more abundant indwelling in God? How, then, did we speak the truth when we said above that God is everywhere wholly present if he is more amply present in some, less in others? But it should be noticed with care that we said he is everywhere wholly present in himself, not in things of which some have a greater capacity for him, others less. LETTER 187.17.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Wright, J. Robert, ed. 2005. [Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon](#). Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

<sup>5</sup> Conti, Marco, and Gianluca Pilara, eds. 2008. [1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther](#).

## **Friday, July 18**

- Read **Proverbs 16**
- Read **History Book: 2 Kings 4-6**

EPHREM THE SYRIAN: (2 Kings 5:8-12) Naaman was suffering from leprosy, and when he heard that a prophet who lived under the command of Jehoram, king of Israel, could cure him, he left and proceeded to the country of the healer and went to the house of Elisha, because he had learned that he was the prophet who could aid him in his distress and that he had to ask him to be healed. But Elisha did not go out to meet him or speak to him. He informed him through a messenger: If he wanted to be healed, he had to wash his body in the Jordan seven times. Now a question rises: Why did Elisha prevent Naaman from seeing him and did not allow him to come into his house? In the first place, because he had served Ben-hadad in his wars. In fact, the prophet knew that the king of Aram had killed many children of Israel, and how Naaman had destroyed their lands and how his hands were stained with innocent blood, for he was the commander of the army and had received full authority over the Arameans. In the second place, because he was stopped by the corruption of leprosy. Elisha knew that the Law prescribed that no leper could be approached or touched.

---

Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture.  
Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Naaman, as a consequence, was enraged. Blaming and accusing Elisha, he left [saying] that he would have never thought to come to a prophet just in order to see him act mysteriously and that he certainly did not expect such words. He believed that his healing would be accomplished through a simple imposition of the hands. So he blamed Elisha and said, "Why did he not come out to meet a man of power who had come to his house? And why did he prevent me from seeing him, and why did he not judge me worthy of speaking to him? And why did he not heal me with the remedy he uses and which is easy and effortless for me? On the contrary, he sends me to the Jordan, as though that river may really purify me; but are not the rivers of my land, the Amana and the Pharpar, sufficient for such purification?"

It is not surprising that he had such thoughts and rebelled, the man who had heard with his own ears and compared the words of the prophet. A man who had made his career in the army could not have access to the mystery hidden in that unusual healing.

Therefore Naaman was sent to the Jordan as to the remedy capable to heal a human being. Indeed, sin is the leprosy of the soul, which is not perceived by the senses, but intelligence has the proof of it, and human nature must be delivered from this disease by Christ's power which is hidden in baptism. It was necessary that Naaman, in order to be purified from two diseases, that of the soul and