

## Week of Trinity 10

*First recite the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the weekly section of the Small Catechism. Then read the Proper and assigned Scripture reading followed by the devotion. Conclude with singing the hymn of the week.*

***Weekly Catechism section: Fifth Commandment (Luther's Small Catechism)***

***Hymn of the Week: Lord, To Thee I Make Confession (TLH 326)***



### **Monday - Introit (Psalm 55:16-18, 22, 1, 4-5, 17, 16)**

#### ***Read Psalm 55.***

Our *Introit* comes from Psalm 55. Here David is lamenting the apostasy of former brethren. Apostasy is when someone who once believed and walked in the Word of God has now turned away from the Word and lost the faith. Some of them become fierce enemies of the gospel while others quietly join in with the world. But they are just as much of a burden on the believers, since they do not defend them and stand with them when the world is raging against the truth. David was in the office of the king, which would lead to the Messiah, the Savior of all mankind. He trusted in the Lord as this true king even as he laments about the one who "put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him; He has broken his covenant."

David's lamentation resembles our Lord Jesus' lament at those in Jerusalem. He longed to embrace them and bring them into the fold like a hen gathers her chicks, but they would not recognize the day of God's visitation in the flesh. In a similar way, those who rejected David would not recognize that God was working through the kingly office of David to bring forth their Savior from David's offspring. But David trusts in God to save, even though all men are liars. So we sing, "I will call upon the Lord, and he will hear my voice." And we assert that God's redemption is already accomplished: "He has redeemed my soul in peace." When you are lamenting the apostasy of those who once sang hymns of praise with you, then don't lose heart. Cast your burdens on the Lord, and he shall sustain you. Losing Christian friends is painful to the heart, but God will not hide himself from your supplication. He will save you, just as he already has redeemed your soul, giving you peace through the blood of his Son.

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## **Tuesday - Old Testament Lesson (Jeremiah 8:4-12)**

### ***Read Jeremiah 8.***

Our Old Testament lesson from Jeremiah 8 shows how destructive and deceitful it is when the law and the gospel are not properly handled. Jeremiah describes what we often today call "gospel reductionism." Gospel reductionism is the practice of reducing the Word of God down to the lowest common standard of what we can call the gospel. It does this by chipping away at what God's law says and what isn't as popular to believe, and it presents a neutered, watered down gospel as the only truth of God's Word. As long as you say that Jesus is your Savior, then nothing else matters. This is gospel reductionism.

The false prophets and priests of Israel were gospel reductionists. They cried, "Peace! Peace!" when there was no peace. They allowed the people to worship false gods, commit sexual immorality, and satisfy their own desires. And then they assured them that they didn't need to be afraid of God. This is why Jeremiah says that the people forgot how to blush. So it is today. Churches that claim to be Christian blatantly ignore what the Bible says about anything that is against the grains of the culture. They claim they can do this, since the only important thing is Christ and his message of forgiveness, peace, mercy, and love. But the more these churches chip away at God's Word, the more they lose Christ. This is because all of the Scriptures are about Christ. The law is given in order to lead us to repentance and thereby lead us to Christ in whom we may live a godly life through faith (Gal 3:24). If all of the Scriptures are about Christ, then it is impossible to throw out the parts we don't like without also throwing out Christ. Our Gospel lesson shows that Christ's primary desire is to save sinners. This is why he weeps over Jerusalem for rejecting him; people are being led astray. It is because of his deep compassion that he both weeps and violently throws out those profaning the temple. This is the Christ who brings peace. It is the same Christ who reveals God's wrath, the very wrath he turned away from all sinners. If you don't want this Christ, then you don't want Christ. Thank God he doesn't reduce him, so that we may enjoy fully him!

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## **Wednesday - Gradual (Psalm 17:8, 2)**

### ***Read Psalm 17.***

Psalm 17 is a song of vindication. To be vindicated is to have what you hope in prove to be true. When the wicked prosper, rejecting the Word

of God as they leave great wealth and earthly ease to their children, then those who trust in the Lord are often discouraged. It may seem that what they hope in is useless. Everything they live, the reason they toil and labor, is despised by those who pay no attention to God's gracious invitation. We therefore pray, "Let my vindication come from Your presence; let Your eyes look on the things that are upright."

The Word David uses for "vindication" is *mishpat*, which also means "right judgment," "equity," or "justice." This is the application of God's Word and promise. It happens when you act on what your faith is in. You know that God has promised you eternal life in Jesus Christ. You know that there is no other salvation but through him. You know that your own works won't save you, that this world won't save you, that none of the wealth and honor of this world will save you. So you act on this faith. You raise your children, not concentrating on worldly success and prestige, but on faith in the gospel. You see a spouse who confesses the truth of Christ to be much more valuable than one who will help you make money, and you value Christian children more than earthly wealth and comfort. You care more that they confess their Savior to you when they are dying than you do that they have fancy careers and higher education. To the unbelievers, it seems like such a waste of potential, a waste of time, energy, and emotion. But God will vindicate you. He will prove that your lifestyle of faith was not in vain, because he will prove that the object of your faith is not in vain. Jesus was vindicated when he was raised from the dead. Everything he did and taught were proven true. This means that everything you believe from his Word is proven true. Your righteousness before God is proven true. In the meantime, he keeps you as the apple of his eye, just as he loves his only begotten Son who died for you. And he looks upon your humble service as upright in his sight. Your hope and trust in his Word, as well as the love issuing forth from it, are not in vain. They will be vindicated, and it will come from God's own presence.

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### **Thursday - Epistle (*1 Corinthians 12:1-11*)**

#### ***Read 1 Corinthians 12.***

God gives various gifts to his church. Every gift serves the whole body, from greatest to smallest. The same Spirit who gives us our common faith and confession of Jesus Christ is the one who bestows these gifts on us. St. Paul speaks of various gifts, which were given throughout the course of the church's history, from the times of the Patriarchs until the

time of the Apostles. God gave various people the gift of prophecy, healing, special wisdom and understanding.

Consider the great faith he gave to the widow of Zaphath who followed the Word of God when Elijah told her to make bread for him, assuring her that the flour and oil would not run out (1 Kings 17). Consider the boldness of Phinehas who would not stand by idle as God's name was being blasphemed by apostate Israelites (Numbers 25; Psalm 106). Consider the great miracles done through Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and others, the wisdom of Solomon and Daniel, not to mention the great works done through his apostles as well as through the sons and daughters of the early believers. Philip's own daughters prophesied (Acts 21:9). The same Spirit who worked all of this is he who gives us faith through the same Word. So don't despise what seems like the lesser gifts. Seek the greater gift, which is love for Christ and one another. No one who confesses Christ is less than another. Each has the same Holy Spirit by whom our Lord has graciously gathered under his wings like a hen gathers her chicks.

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### **Friday - Alleluia Verse (Psalm 88:1)**

#### ***Read Psalm 88.***

The *Alleluia verse*, taken from Psalm 88:1, teaches us how to cry. This is in preparation for the Gospel Lesson from Luke 19 in which Jesus weeps over Jerusalem. Christians weep. But they do not weep as those who have no hope. They lament their sins and the wickedness of the world, but their cries rest on the sure promise of salvation in Christ. So we sing: "O LORD, God of my salvation, I have cried out day and night before You." We rest on the God of our Salvation. The Psalmist continues to lament how death is drawing near and how close companions have abandoned him. "Loved one and friend you have put far from me, and my acquaintances into darkness. (Ps 88:18)" This is the grief felt by Jesus himself when he saw how Jerusalem did not recognize him as their Savior who would bring them peace. It is like the tears of Elisha when he foretold how Hazael, King of Syria, would bring about God's fierce wrath and judgment on Israel. So Christ saw how Rome would bring God's judgment on Jerusalem for not recognizing God when he visited them in the flesh.

This is our sorrow as well when we live in this dying, unbelieving world. And we recognize the unbelief around us as God's judgment, as the Psalmist says (88:15-17), "I have been afflicted and ready to die

from my youth; I suffer Your terrors; I am distraught. Your fierce wrath has gone over me; your terrors have cut me off. They came around me all day long like water; they engulfed me altogether." It is when we see the misery of this life as coming from the heavy hand of God when we learn to fear God rather than men. We therefore learn to cast our anxieties on the God of our salvation. In this way, we do not weep without hope. And we follow the example of our Savior whose tears were not in vain. He went to the cross, bearing God's wrath and judgment for all sinners. This is our hope and the foundation of our faith and all our prayerful cries.

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### **Saturday - Gospel (Luke 19:41-48)**

#### ***Read Luke 19.***

In the year 70 A.D. Roman soldiers, led by general and later Emperor Titus, besieged Jerusalem, brutally killing the people within and utterly destroying the city -- including the Temple. It happened just as Jesus had predicted. He says, "For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Yes, God's judgment is real. The thought of it should drive us all to our knees in repentance over the filthiness our own sins. But notice something about Jesus when he predicts this judgment. What is he doing? Is he laughing while rubbing his hands together at the thought of such bloodshed? No! He is weeping. He is weeping over Jerusalem, because he loves her. He loves Israel, because Israel is God's first born (Ex 4:22). And these tears shed by our Lord are the tears that led him to the cross. The tears turned into righteous zeal, which led him down to Jerusalem where he would drive out the money changers from the Temple. He did this in order to prepare for the true godly service that he would perform in the true Temple of his body. These tears were therefore not in vain. The weeping of our Lord expresses the love and longing he has to take all sinners under his wings like a hen gathers her chicks. And so, with the zeal of God, that is what he did. He bore the penalty of the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2), and he declares this gospel to us with the power of the Holy Spirit through his apostles (Luke 24:47-49).

When Jesus weeps over Jerusalem, he weeps with us over those we know

who have left the faith, following the patterns of this world (Rom 12:2). But like our Lord's tears, our tears are not in vain either. Though the world -- and even some of our own family -- may call us fools, we find our comfort in the cross of Jesus that took away all the sin for which we mourn and gives us confidence to confess our Lord with zeal.

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# 326

## Lord, to Thee I Make Confession

Ps. 139: 7-10

8. 7. 8. 7. 8. 8.

Herr, ich habe missgehandelt

Herr, ich habe missgehandelt

Johann Franck, 1649, cento

Johann Crüger, 1649

Tr., Catherine Winkworth, 1868, alt.

1 Lord, to Thee I make con - fes - sion; I have sinned and  
 2 Yet, though con-science' voice ap-pal me, Fa - ther, I will  
 3 For Thy Son did suf - fer for me, Gave Him - self to  
 4 Then on Him I cast my bur - den, Sink it in the

gone a - stray, I have mul - ti - plied trans-gres - sion,  
 seek Thy face; Tho' Thy child I dare not call me,  
 res - cue me, Died to heal me and re - store me,  
 depths be - low. Let me know Thy gra - cious par - don,

Cho - sen for my-self my way. Led by Thee to see my  
 Yet re - ceive me to Thy grace. Do not for my sins for-  
 Rec - on - ciled me un - to Thee. 'Tis a - lone His cross can  
 Wash me, make me white as snow. Let Thy Spir - it leave me

er - rors, Lord, I trem-ble at Thy ter - rors.  
 sake me; Do not let Thy wrath o'er-take me.  
 van - quish These dark fears and soothe this an - guish.  
 nev - er; Make me on - ly Thine for - ev - er. A-men.