



“Resisting the Unforgiving Flesh”

1 BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:

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

2 SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED

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.

3 PRAY THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

4 PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER

Morning. 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.

Evening. 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.

Around the Word Devotions + the week of November 16-22, 2025

THEME OF THE WEEK: Resisting the Unforgiving Flesh

Jesus teaches His people to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." We are forgiven people. We ought to be forgiving people. But our flesh resists this. Our sinful flesh loves to hang on to the sin committed against us, to relish it, to use it, to hold it against our enemies and even our friends. The sins committed against us are called forth as the evidence to support our self-righteous claims. But Jesus has none of it. His mercy is lavish, and it is not just for us, but for everyone around us. The church is a kingdom of mercy and kindness and grace.

SUN

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 18:23-35 "Forgiving From the Heart"

Anger says that someone deserves punishment for what they have done to you, a loved one, or your property. Anger, if left unchecked, is an uncontrollable blaze that consumes all in its path including the individual who has it. Anger refuses to forgive because forgiveness comes from compassion. Anger has no time for compassion. This denial of forgiveness causes the Holy Spirit to grieve because you act as if you haven't received His forgiveness. It denies that you are part of one, holy, Christian church. Yet God is still faithful. God has steadfast love even when you have anger. He sends the Holy Spirit to proclaim this love to you. You have been forgiven by Christ. In His cross-death and resurrection you are able to do good works, which include curbing your anger and forgiving others. *O Lord, help me forgive, as You have forgiven me. Amen.*

MON

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 119:169-176 "Astray Like a Lost Sheep"

Even here at the end of the great Psalm about the Lord's Word, David confesses that he has "gone astray like a lost sheep," (Psalm 119:176). No matter how well we know the Scriptures, we remain sinners until we reach the grave. There is never a time that we don't need the Lord's mercy. We learn, then, to pray. It is no accident that Psalm 119 is a prayer. Our life of learning the Lord's Word and treasuring His commandments is a life lived in prayer. In faith we come to the Lord, we ask for His help, we beg for what we need, we plead for His mercy, and we find Him always ready to help and save us. *I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Your servant, for I do not forget Your commandments. Amen.*

TUE

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 1:3-11 "Paul's Prayers"

St. Paul begins almost all his letters with a prayer of thanksgiving. He truly keeps his own admonishment, "giving thanks always for all things," (Ephesians 5:20). Notice the things Paul thanks God for in his prayer for the Philippians: 1. their fellowship in the Gospel (1:5), 2. that the Lord will complete the work of salvation that He has begun (1:6), and 3. that the Philippians are fellow partakers of grace (1:7). He also petitions the Lord on their behalf, that their love would increase with knowledge and discernment (1:9), that they would approve of excellent things and remain sincere and without offense (1:10), and that they would be filled with the fruits of righteousness (1:11). Paul's prayer teaches us to pray. *Lord, grant us to grow in faith, hope, and love. Amen.*

WED

SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 7:9-11 "Mercy and Punishment"

God's law has both threats and promises. God promises to bless those who keep His commandments and punish those who break them. So we remember our catechism, "God threatens to punish all who break these commandments. Therefore, we should fear His wrath and not do anything against them. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep these commandments. Therefore, we should also love and trust in Him and gladly do what He commands." There are blessings for keeping His commandments, but more, there are blessings abounding for those who trust the Gospel and find God's unconditional mercy in Christ. *Lord, grant us Your Spirit so that we would trust Your promises and begin to keep Your commandments. Amen.*

THU

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 18:1-20 "The Little Ones and the Kingdom of Heaven"

Jesus puts a little child in the midst of the disciples. Can you imagine it? Here are these twelve men in their strength and resolve who have left everything to follow Jesus, and in the middle of them is a little child, and Jesus says to them, "Unless you are like this child, you have no place in My kingdom." His is not a kingdom of strength, a kingdom of power, a kingdom of might, a kingdom of effort, a kingdom of triumph. It is not a kingdom of this world. His is a kingdom of humility, won through death, purchased with blood, established with a cross and kept with a promise. His is a kingdom of mercy, and we enter it through the humility of faith. *Lord, make us as humble children to rejoice in Your kingdom of grace. Amen.*

FRI

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 4:30-32 "Sealed to Good"

To grieve the Holy Spirit is to deny forgiveness, through which you were sealed for salvation. You can stand unafraid on the last day because you are forgiven. Do not treat your neighbor as if Christ did not die for sinners. It is a sin against the faith planted in your heart by the Spirit. To believe Christ did not die for sinners is to deny that He died for you. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit. Who, by forgiving your sins in baptism, sealed you for the day of redemption. *O LORD, keep us from grieving the Holy Spirit and hating Your mercy. Help us to rejoice in mercy not just toward ourselves, but toward each other, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

SAT

SCRIPTURE: Psalm 31:14-24 "The Lord is My Rock and My Fortress"

The unforgiving flesh often clings to the sins of others for revenge. But revenge belongs to the Lord, and nowhere better than the Psalms does the Christian learn to leave revenge to God. The Psalms do not hesitate to declare punishment upon the wicked for their sins, but that punishment always belongs to God. Always do the Psalms call on the Lord to punish the wicked, while at the same time clinging to the steadfast love of God who preserves His faithful. He repays the one who acts in pride; but the faithful humbly waits on the Lord. He hides the one who takes refuge in Him. *Father, be a rock of refuge and a fortress of strength for me, that my unforgiving flesh might be put to death, and I learn to gladly forgive as I have been forgiven. Amen.*

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5 PRAY THE PSALM OF THE WEEK **Apocraphal Esther 13:9-11; (Psalm 119:1, 38-40)**

The whole world is / in Your power;*

○ Lord, King Almighty, no one can / gainsay You.

For You have made / heav'n and earth;*

You are / Lord of all!

Blessed are the undefiled / in the way, *

who walk in the law / of the Lord!

Establish Your word to Your / servant, *

who is devoted to / fearing You.

Turn away my reproach / which I dread, *

for Your judg- / ments are good.

Behold, I long for Your / precepts:*

revive me in Your / righteousness.

6 SAY TOGETHER THE **VERSE OF THE WEEK Ephesians 6:13**

"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm."

7 READ THE SCRIPTURE AND DEVOTION (OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE)

8 PRAY THE PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord, we implore You to keep Your household the Church in continual godliness, that through Your protection she may be free from all adversities and devoutly given to serve You in good works; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

9 PRAYER FOR OURSELVES AND OTHERS

10 SING OR SAY THE HYMN OF THE WEEK **Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word**

TLH 261, LSB 655

Martin Luther



1. Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word;
Curb those who fain by craft and sword
Would wrest the Kingdom from Thy
Son
And set at naught all He hath done.
2. Lord Jesus Christ, Thy power make
known,
For Thou art Lord of lords alone;
Defend Thy Christendom that we
May evermore sing praise to Thee.
3. O Comforter of priceless worth.
Send peace and unity on earth.
Support us in our final strife
And lead us out of death to life.