



Daily Prayer
+ Friday, April 17, 2020 +

Invocation

L: Christ is risen!

C: He is risen, indeed! Alleluia.

Psalmody

Psalm 145:1-4,8-9

L: I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever.

C: Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever and ever.

L: Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable.

C: One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts.

L: The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

C: The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made.

C: Glory be to Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Hymn

468, v. 1-2

[1] I am content!

My Jesus ever lives,

In whom my heart is pleased.

He has fulfilled the Law of God for me,

God's wrath He has appeased.

Since He in death could perish never,

I also shall not die forever.

I am content! I am content!

[2] I am content!

My Jesus is my head;

His member I shall be.

He bowed His head when
on the cross He died

With cries of agony.

Now death is brought into subjection

For me by Jesus' resurrection.

I am content! I am content!

Reading

Hebrews 12:1-24

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much

more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears. For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. For they could not endure the order that was given, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned." Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I tremble with fear." But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new

covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

L: O Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Devotional Message from Pastor Thompson

Our reading today from Hebrews 12 teaches on the race of faith. Paul writes that our religion can be compared to a long-distance running race in which our end goal is heaven and the kingdom of God.

And in this race of faith, we are not running alone, but are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. Paul is specifically referring to the saints of old listed in the previous chapter, Hebrews 11: Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and all of the people of Israel. These are the great men and women of faith in the Old Testament.

In supplement to this list, we could add all of the Christian men and women in our own lives who have inspired us through their faith. These are the modern day saints of God who through their example have helped us to run the race of faith. Their faith helps us to, "*lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely*" and to "*look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith*". (Hebrews 1:1-2)

This passage from Hebrews 12 reminds us that we are not alone in our faith. Christianity is not a "*me and Jesus*"

religion; but a community of believers who share a common faith. We gather together for worship and we call upon a common Father. We read from the same book and we share a common baptism. We are brothers and sisters in Christ. We belong to a family of faith.

As Paul writes, "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many....Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." (1 Corinthians 12)

Which is to say that we are running the race of faith *together*. This is important to remember because although faith is personal and each person is required by God to have their own faith in him; our faith is never alone. Each of us is required to run; but we run the race together.

And this is a gift from God because it is easier and safer to run in a pack than it is to run on your own. You have brothers and sisters in Christ who are here for you every step of the way. May this gift of fellowship and communion in Christ be a blessing to us all. Amen.

Apostles' Creed

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.

Lord's Prayer

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.

Collect

L: Almighty God, you show those in error the light of your truth so that they may return to the way of righteousness. Grant faithfulness to all believers in Christ so that we who seek to know the truth might avoid all that is false; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Blessing

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.

Hymn

468, v. 3-4

[3] I am content!

My Jesus is my light,
My radiant sun of grace.
His cheering rays beam
blessings forth for all,
Sweet comfort, hope, and peace.
This Easter sun has brought salvation
And everlasting exultation.
I am content! I am content!

[4] I am content!

At length I shall be free,
Awakened from the dead,
Arising glorious evermore to be
With You, my living head.
The chains that hold my body, sever;
Then shall my soul rejoice forever.
I am content! I am content!