FAMILY HOME DEVOTIONS

November 16-22, 2026



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH-LCMS

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Monday

Psalm 78:37-53

37 Their heart was not steadfast toward him;
they were not faithful to his covenant.
38 Yet he, being compassionate,
atoned for their iniquity
and did not destroy them;
he restrained his anger often
and did not stir up all his wrath.
39 He remembered that they were but flesh,
a wind that passes and comes not again.
40 How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness
and grieved him in the desert!
41 They tested God again and again
and provoked the Holy One of Israel.
42 They did not remember his power
or the day when he redeemed them from the foe,
43 when he performed his signs in Egypt
and his marvels in the fields of Zoan.
44 He turned their rivers to blood,
so that they could not drink of their streams.
45 He sent among them swarms of flies, which devoured them,
and frogs, which destroyed them.
46 He gave their crops to the destroying locust
and the fruit of their labor to the locust.
47 He destroyed their vines with hail
and their sycamores with frost.
48 He gave over their cattle to the hail
and their flocks to thunderbolts.
49 He let loose on them his burning anger,
wrath, indignation, and distress,
a company of destroying angels.
50 He made a path for his anger;
he did not spare them from death,
but gave their lives over to the plague.
51 He struck down every firstborn in Egypt,
the firstfruits of their strength in the tents of Ham.
52 Then he led out his people like sheep
and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.
53 He led them in safety, so that they were not afraid,
but the sea overwhelmed their enemies.

Jeremiah 31:1-34

The Lord Will Turn Mourning to Joy
31 “At that time, declares the Lord, I will be the God of all the clans of Israel, and they shall be my people.”
2 Thus says the Lord: “The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest,
3 the Lord appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.
4 Again I will build you, and you shall be built, O virgin Israel! Again you shall adorn yourself with tambourines and shall go forth in the dance of the merrymakers.
5 Again you shall plant vineyards on the mountains of Samaria; the planters shall plant and shall enjoy the fruit.
6 For there shall be a day when watchmen will call in the hill country of Ephraim: ‘Arise, and let us go up to Zion, to the Lord our God.’”
7 For thus says the Lord: “Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, ‘O Lord, save your people, the remnant of Israel.’
8 Behold, I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, the pregnant woman and she who is in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here.
9 With weeping they shall come, and with pleas for mercy I will lead them back, I will make them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble, for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.
10 “Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, ‘He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.’
11 For the Lord has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.
12 They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall be like a watered garden, and they shall languish no more.
13 Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.
14 I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, declares the Lord.”
15 Thus says the Lord: “A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.”

November 16

16 Thus says the Lord: “Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, declares the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy.
17 There is hope for your future, declares the Lord, and your children shall come back to their own country.
18 I have heard Ephraim grieving, ‘You have disciplined me, and I was disciplined, like an untrained calf; bring me back that I may be restored, for you are the Lord my God.
19 For after I had turned away, I relented, and after I was instructed, I struck my thigh; I was ashamed, and I was confounded, because I bore the disgrace of my youth.’
20 Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he my darling child? For as often as I speak against him, I do remember him still. Therefore my heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him, declares the Lord.
21 “Set up road markers for yourself; make yourself guideposts; consider well the highway, the road by which you went. Return, O virgin Israel, return to these your cities.
22 How long will you waver, O faithless daughter? For the Lord has created a new thing on the earth: a woman encircles a man.”
23 Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: “Once more they shall use these words in the land of Judah and in its cities, when I restore their fortunes: “‘The Lord bless you, O habitation of righteousness, O holy hill!’
24 And Judah and all its cities shall dwell there together, and the farmers and those who wander with their flocks. 25 For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul I will replenish.”
26 At this I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me.
27 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and the seed of beast. 28 And it shall come to pass that as I have watched over them to pluck up and break down, to overthrow, destroy, and bring harm, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the Lord. 29 In those days they shall no longer say: “‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.’
30 But everyone shall die for his own iniquity. Each man who eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.
The New Covenant
31 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,
32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. 33 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Matthew 27:1-10

Jesus Delivered to Pilate
27 When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death. 2 And they bound him and led him away and delivered him over to Pilate the governor.
Judas Hangs Himself
3 Then when Judas, his betrayer, saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders, 4 saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” They said, “What is that to us? See to it yourself.” 5 And throwing down the pieces of silver into the temple, he departed, and he went and hanged himself. 6 But the chief priests, taking the pieces of silver, said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, since it is blood money.” 7 So they took counsel and bought with them the potter's field as a burial place for strangers. 8 Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. 9 Then was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel, 10 and they gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord directed me.”

The Ten Commandments

The Ninth Commandment
You shall not covet your neighbor’s house.
What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor’s inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

Tuesday

Psalm 78:54-72

54 And he brought them to his holy land,
to the mountain which his right hand had won.
55 He drove out nations before them;
he apportioned them for a possession
and settled the tribes of Israel in their tents.
56 Yet they tested and rebelled against the Most High God
and did not keep his testimonies,
57 but turned away and acted treacherously like their fathers;
they twisted like a deceitful bow.
58 For they provoked him to anger with their high places;
they moved him to jealousy with their idols.
59 When God heard, he was full of wrath,
and he utterly rejected Israel.
60 He forsook his dwelling at Shiloh,
the tent where he dwelt among mankind,
61 and delivered his power to captivity,
his glory to the hand of the foe.
62 He gave his people over to the sword
and vented his wrath on his heritage.
63 Fire devoured their young men,
and their young women had no marriage song.
64 Their priests fell by the sword,
and their widows made no lamentation.
65 Then the Lord awoke as from sleep,
like a strong man shouting because of wine.
66 And he put his adversaries to rout;
he put them to everlasting shame.
67 He rejected the tent of Joseph;
he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim,
68 but he chose the tribe of Judah,
Mount Zion, which he loves.
69 He built his sanctuary like the high heavens,
like the earth, which he has founded forever.
70 He chose David his servant
and took him from the sheepfolds;
71 from following the nursing ewes he brought him
to shepherd Jacob his people,
Israel his inheritance.
72 With upright heart he shepherded them
and guided them with his skillful hand.

Jeremiah 33:1-22

The Lord Promises Peace

33 The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah a second time, while he was still shut up in the court of the guard: 2 “Thus says the Lord who made the earth, the Lord who formed it to establish it—the Lord is his name: 3 Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known. 4 For thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the houses of this city and the houses of the kings of Judah that were torn down to make a defense against the siege mounds and against the sword: 5 They are coming in to fight against the Chaldeans and to fill them with the dead bodies of men whom I shall strike down in my anger and my wrath, for I have hidden my face from this city because of all their evil. 6 Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them and reveal to them abundance of prosperity and security. 7 I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and rebuild them as they were at first. 8 I will cleanse them from all the guilt of their sin against me, and I will forgive all the guilt of their sin and rebellion against me. 9 And this city shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and a glory before all the nations of the earth who shall hear of all the good that I do for them. They shall fear and tremble because of all the good and all the prosperity I provide for it.
10 “Thus says the Lord: In this place of which you say, ‘It is a waste without man or beast,’ in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem that are desolate, without man or inhabitant or beast, there shall be heard again 11 the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voices of those who sing, as they bring thank offerings to the house of the Lord:

“‘Give thanks to the Lord of hosts,
for the Lord is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever!’

For I will restore the fortunes of the land as at first, says the Lord.
12 “Thus says the Lord of hosts: In this place that is waste, without man or beast, and in all of its cities, there shall again be habitations of shepherds resting their flocks. 13 In the cities of the hill country, in the cities of the Shephelah, and in the cities of the Negeb, in the land of Benjamin, the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, flocks shall again pass under the hands of the one who counts them, says the Lord.

The Lord's Eternal Covenant with David

November 17

14 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of
Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and
righteousness in the land. 16 In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will dwell securely. And this is the name by which it will
be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness.’
17 “For thus says the Lord: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, 18 and the Levitical priests shall
never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to burn grain offerings, and to make sacrifices forever.”
19 The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: 20 “Thus says the Lord: If you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with
the night, so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, 21 then also my covenant with David my servant may be
broken, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and my covenant with the Levitical priests my ministers. 22 As the host
of heaven cannot be numbered and the sands of the sea cannot be measured, so I will multiply the offspring of David my servant, and
the Levitical priests who minister to me.”

Matthew 27:11-32

Jesus Before Pilate
11 Now Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” Jesus said, “You have said so.”
12 But when he was accused by the chief priests and elders, he gave no answer. 13 Then Pilate said to him, “Do you not hear how
many things they testify against you?” 14 But he gave him no answer, not even to a single charge, so that the governor was greatly
amazed.
The Crowd Chooses Barabbas
15 Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to release for the crowd any one prisoner whom they wanted. 16 And they had
then a notorious prisoner called Barabbas. 17 So when they had gathered, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release for
you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?” 18 For he knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him up. 19 Besides,
while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, “Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered
much because of him today in a dream.” 20 Now the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and
destroy Jesus. 21 The governor again said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release for you?” And they said,
“Barabbas.” 22 Pilate said to them, “Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said, “Let him be crucified!” 23 And
he said, “Why? What evil has he done?” But they shouted all the more, “Let him be crucified!”
Pilate Delivers Jesus to Be Crucified
24 So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before
the crowd, saying, “I am innocent of this man's blood; see to it yourselves.” 25 And all the people answered, “His blood be on us and
on our children!” 26 Then he released for them Barabbas, and having scourged Jesus, delivered him to be crucified.
Jesus Is Mocked
27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole battalion before him.
28 And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, 29 and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a
reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” 30 And they spit on him and took
the reed and struck him on the head. 31 And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on
him and led him away to crucify him.
The Crucifixion
32 As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. They compelled this man to carry his cross.

The Ten Commandments

The Tenth Commandment
You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your
neighbor.
What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not entice or force away our neighbor’s wife, workers, or animals,
or turn them against him, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

Wednesday

Psalm 79

How Long, O Lord?
A Psalm of Asaph.
79 O God, the nations have come into your inheritance;
they have defiled your holy temple;
they have laid Jerusalem in ruins.
2 They have given the bodies of your servants
to the birds of the heavens for food,
the flesh of your faithful to the beasts of the earth.
3 They have poured out their blood like water
all around Jerusalem,
and there was no one to bury them.
4 We have become a taunt to our neighbors,
mocked and derided by those around us.
5 How long, O Lord? Will you be angry forever?
Will your jealousy burn like fire?
6 Pour out your anger on the nations
that do not know you,
and on the kingdoms
that do not call upon your name!
7 For they have devoured Jacob
and laid waste his habitation.
8 Do not remember against us our former iniquities;
let your compassion come speedily to meet us,
for we are brought very low.
9 Help us, O God of our salvation,
for the glory of your name;
deliver us, and atone for our sins,
for your name's sake!
10 Why should the nations say,
"Where is their God?"
Let the avenging of the outpoured blood of your servants
be known among the nations before our eyes!
11 Let the groans of the prisoners come before you;
according to your great power, preserve those doomed to die!
12 Return sevenfold into the lap of our neighbors
the taunts with which they have taunted you, O Lord!
13 But we your people, the sheep of your pasture,
will give thanks to you forever;
from generation to generation we will recount your praise.

Jeremiah 37:1-21

Jeremiah Warns Zedekiah
37 Zedekiah the son of Josiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made king in the land of Judah, reigned instead of Coniah the son of Jehoiakim. 2 But neither he nor his servants nor the people of the land listened to the words of the Lord that he spoke through Jeremiah the prophet.
3 King Zedekiah sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah the priest, the son of Maaseiah, to Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "Please pray for us to the Lord our God." 4 Now Jeremiah was still going in and out among the people, for he had not yet been put in prison. 5 The army of Pharaoh had come out of Egypt. And when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem heard news about them, they withdrew from Jerusalem.
6 Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah the prophet: 7 "Thus says the Lord, God of Israel: Thus shall you say to the king of Judah who sent you to me to inquire of me, 'Behold, Pharaoh's army that came to help you is about to return to Egypt, to its own land. 8 And the Chaldeans shall come back and fight against this city. They shall capture it and burn it with fire. 9 Thus says the Lord, Do not deceive yourselves, saying, "The Chaldeans will surely go away from us," for they will not go away. 10 For even if you should defeat the whole army of Chaldeans who are fighting against you, and there remained of them only wounded men, every man in his tent, they would rise up and burn this city with fire.'"
Jeremiah Imprisoned
11 Now when the Chaldean army had withdrawn from Jerusalem at the approach of Pharaoh's army, 12 Jeremiah set out from Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin to receive his portion there among the people. 13 When he was at the Benjamin Gate, a sentry there named Irijah the son of Shelemiah, son of Hananiah, seized Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans." 14 And Jeremiah said, "It is a lie; I am not deserting to the Chaldeans." But Irijah would not listen to him, and seized Jeremiah and brought him to the officials. 15 And the officials were enraged at Jeremiah, and they beat him and imprisoned him in the house of Jonathan the secretary, for it had been made a prison.

November 17

16 When Jeremiah had come to the dungeon cells and remained there many days, 17 King Zedekiah sent for him and received him. The king questioned him secretly in his house and said, “Is there any word from the Lord?” Jeremiah said, “There is.” Then he said, “You shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon.” 18 Jeremiah also said to King Zedekiah, “What wrong have I done to you or your servants or this people, that you have put me in prison? 19 Where are your prophets who prophesied to you, saying, ‘The king of Babylon will not come against you and against this land’? 20 Now hear, please, O my lord the king: let my humble plea come before you and do not send me back to the house of Jonathan the secretary, lest I die there.” 21 So King Zedekiah gave orders, and they committed Jeremiah to the court of the guard. And a loaf of bread was given him daily from the bakers' street, until all the bread of the city was gone. So Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.

Matthew 27:33-56

33 And when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull), 34 they offered him wine to drink, mixed with gall, but when he tasted it, he would not drink it. 35 And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots. 36 Then they sat down and kept watch over him there. 37 And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.” 38 Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.
39 And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads 40 and saying, “You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.” 41 So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying, 42 “He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. 43 He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”
44 And the robbers who were crucified with him also reviled him in the same way.
The Death of Jesus
45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” 47 And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, “This man is calling Elijah.” 48 And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. 49 But the others said, “Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him.”
50 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.
51 And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.
52 The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, 53 and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. 54 When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!”
55 There were also many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him,
56 among whom were Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Joseph and the mother of the sons of Zebedee.

The Ten Commandments

The Close of the Commandments
What does God say about all these commandments?
He says, “I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments.” (Ex. 20: 5-6)
What does this mean? 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.

Thursday

Psalm 80

Restore Us, O God
To the choirmaster: according to Lilies. A Testimony. Of Asaph,
a Psalm.
80 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock.
You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.
2 Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up your might
and come to save us!
3 Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved!
4 O Lord God of hosts,
how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?
5 You have fed them with the bread of tears
and given them tears to drink in full measure.
6 You make us an object of contention for our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh among themselves.
7 Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved!
8 You brought a vine out of Egypt;
you drove out the nations and planted it.
9 You cleared the ground for it;
it took deep root and filled the land.
10 The mountains were covered with its shade,
the mighty cedars with its branches.
11 It sent out its branches to the sea
and its shoots to the River.
12 Why then have you broken down its walls,
so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit?
13 The boar from the forest ravages it,
and all that move in the field feed on it.
14 Turn again, O God of hosts!
Look down from heaven, and see;
have regard for this vine,
15 the stock that your right hand planted,
and for the son whom you made strong for yourself.
16 They have burned it with fire; they have cut it down;
may they perish at the rebuke of your face!
17 But let your hand be on the man of your right hand,
the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself!
18 Then we shall not turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call upon your name!
19 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts!
Let your face shine, that we may be saved!

Jeremiah 38:1-28

Jeremiah Cast into the Cistern
38 Now Shephatiah the son of Mattan, Gedaliah the son of Pashhur, Jucal the son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur the son of Malchiah heard the words that Jeremiah was saying to all the people: 2 “Thus says the Lord: He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out to the Chaldeans shall live. He shall have his life as a prize of war, and live. 3 Thus says the Lord: This city shall surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon and be taken.” 4 Then the officials said to the king, “Let this man be put to death, for he is weakening the hands of the soldiers who are left in this city, and the hands of all the people, by speaking such words to them. For this man is not seeking the welfare of this people, but their harm.” 5 King Zedekiah said, “Behold, he is in your hands, for the king can do nothing against you.” 6 So they took Jeremiah and cast him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king's son, which was in the court of the guard, letting Jeremiah down by ropes. And there was no water in the cistern, but only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud.
Jeremiah Rescued from the Cistern
7 When Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, a eunuch who was in the king's house, heard that they had put Jeremiah into the cistern—the king was sitting in the Benjamin Gate— 8 Ebed-melech went from the king's house and said to the king, 9 “My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they did to Jeremiah the prophet by casting him into the cistern, and he will die there of hunger, for there is no bread left in the city.” 10 Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, “Take thirty men with you from here, and lift Jeremiah the prophet out of the cistern before he dies.” 11 So Ebed-melech took the men with him and went to the house of the king, to a wardrobe in the storehouse, and took from there old rags and worn-out clothes, which he let down to Jeremiah in the cistern by ropes. 12 Then Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said to Jeremiah, “Put the rags and clothes between your armpits and the ropes.” Jeremiah did so. 13 Then they drew Jeremiah up with ropes and lifted him out of the cistern. And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard.
Jeremiah Warns Zedekiah Again

November 19

14 King Zedekiah sent for Jeremiah the prophet and received him at the third entrance of the temple of the Lord. The king said to Jeremiah, “I will ask you a question; hide nothing from me.” 15 Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “If I tell you, will you not surely put me to death? And if I give you counsel, you will not listen to me.” 16 Then King Zedekiah swore secretly to Jeremiah, “As the Lord lives, who made our souls, I will not put you to death or deliver you into the hand of these men who seek your life.”
17 Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, “Thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: If you will surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then your life shall be spared, and this city shall not be burned with fire, and you and your house shall live.
18 But if you do not surrender to the officials of the king of Babylon, then this city shall be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and you shall not escape from their hand.” 19 King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “I am afraid of the Judeans who have deserted to the Chaldeans, lest I be handed over to them and they deal cruelly with me.” 20 Jeremiah said, “You shall not be given to them. Obey now the voice of the Lord in what I say to you, and it shall be well with you, and your life shall be spared. 21 But if you refuse to surrender, this is the vision which the Lord has shown to me: 22 Behold, all the women left in the house of the king of Judah were being led out to the officials of the king of Babylon and were saying,

“‘Your trusted friends have deceived you
  and prevailed against you;
now that your feet are sunk in the mud,
  they turn away from you.’

23 All your wives and your sons shall be led out to the Chaldeans, and you yourself shall not escape from their hand, but shall be seized by the king of Babylon, and this city shall be burned with fire.”
24 Then Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, “Let no one know of these words, and you shall not die. 25 If the officials hear that I have spoken with you and come to you and say to you, ‘Tell us what you said to the king and what the king said to you; hide nothing from us and we will not put you to death,’ 26 then you shall say to them, ‘I made a humble plea to the king that he would not send me back to the house of Jonathan to die there.’” 27 Then all the officials came to Jeremiah and asked him, and he answered them as the king had instructed him. So they stopped speaking with him, for the conversation had not been overheard. 28 And Jeremiah remained in the court of the guard until the day that Jerusalem was taken.

Matthew 27:57-66

Jesus Is Buried
57 When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also was a disciple of Jesus. 58 He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. 59 And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen shroud 60 and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had cut in the rock. And he rolled a great stone to the entrance of the tomb and went away. 61 Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.
The Guard at the Tomb
62 The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate 63 and said, “Sir, we remember how that impostor said, while he was still alive, ‘After three days I will rise.’ 64 Therefore order the tomb to be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples go and steal him away and tell the people, ‘He has risen from the dead,’ and the last fraud will be worse than the first.” 65 Pilate said to them, “You have a guard of soldiers. Go, make it as secure as you can.” 66 So they went and made the tomb secure by sealing the stone and setting a guard.

The Apostles’ Creed

The First Article: Creation
I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
What does this mean? I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him.
This is most certainly true.

Friday

Psalm 81

Oh, That My People Would Listen to Me
To the choirmaster: according to The Gittith. Of Asaph.
81 Sing aloud to God our strength;
shout for joy to the God of Jacob!
2 Raise a song; sound the tambourine,
the sweet lyre with the harp.
3 Blow the trumpet at the new moon,
at the full moon, on our feast day.
4 For it is a statute for Israel,
a rule of the God of Jacob.
5 He made it a decree in Joseph
when he went out over the land of Egypt.
I hear a language I had not known:
6 "I relieved your shoulder of the burden;
your hands were freed from the basket.
7 In distress you called, and I delivered you;
I answered you in the secret place of thunder;
I tested you at the waters of Meribah. Selah
8 Hear, O my people, while I admonish you!
O Israel, if you would but listen to me!
9 There shall be no strange god among you;
you shall not bow down to a foreign god.
10 I am the Lord your God,
who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.
11 "But my people did not listen to my voice;
Israel would not submit to me.
12 So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts,
to follow their own counsels.
13 Oh, that my people would listen to me,
that Israel would walk in my ways!
14 I would soon subdue their enemies
and turn my hand against their foes.
15 Those who hate the Lord would cringe toward him,
and their fate would last forever.
16 But he would feed you with the finest of the wheat,
and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you."

Daniel 1:1-21

Daniel Taken to Babylon
1 In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it.
2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with some of the vessels of the house of God. And he brought them to the land of Shinar, to the house of his god, and placed the vessels in the treasury of his god. 3 Then the king commanded Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring some of the people of Israel, both of the royal family and of the nobility, 4 youths without blemish, of good appearance and skillful in all wisdom, endowed with knowledge, understanding learning, and competent to stand in the king's palace, and to teach them the literature and language of the Chaldeans. 5 The king assigned them a daily portion of the food that the king ate, and of the wine that he drank. They were to be educated for three years, and at the end of that time they were to stand before the king. 6 Among these were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the tribe of Judah. 7 And the chief of the eunuchs gave them names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah he called Shadrach, Mishael he called Meshach, and Azariah he called Abednego.
Daniel's Faithfulness
8 But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's food, or with the wine that he drank. Therefore he asked the chief of the eunuchs to allow him not to defile himself. 9 And God gave Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the chief of the eunuchs, 10 and the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, "I fear my lord the king, who assigned your food and your drink; for why should he see that you were in worse condition than the youths who are of your own age? So you would endanger my head with the king." 11 Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and

November 20

Azariah, 12 “Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. 13 Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king's food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see.” 14 So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. 15 At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king's food. 16 So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables.
17 As for these four youths, God gave them learning and skill in all literature and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. 18 At the end of the time, when the king had commanded that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. 19 And the king spoke with them, and among all of them none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Therefore they stood before the king. 20 And in every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters that were in all his kingdom. 21 And Daniel was there until the first year of King Cyrus.

Matthew 28:1-20

The Resurrection
28 Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. 2 And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. 3 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow. 4 And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. 5 But the angel said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. 6 He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. 7 Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.” 8 So they departed quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples. 9 And behold, Jesus met them and said, “Greetings!” And they came up and took hold of his feet and worshiped him. 10 Then Jesus said to them, “Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.”
The Report of the Guard
11 While they were going, behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place. 12 And when they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers 13 and said, “Tell people, ‘His disciples came by night and stole him away while we were asleep.’ 14 And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will satisfy him and keep you out of trouble.” 15 So they took the money and did as they were directed. And this story has been spread among the Jews to this day.
The Great Commission
16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The Apostles’ Creed

The Second Article: Redemption
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.
What does this mean? I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil; not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity.
This is most certainly true.

Saturday

Psalm 82

Rescue the Weak and Needy
A Psalm of Asaph.
82 God has taken his place in the divine council;
in the midst of the gods he holds judgment:
2 “How long will you judge unjustly
and show partiality to the wicked? Selah
3 Give justice to the weak and the fatherless;
maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.
4 Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”
5 They have neither knowledge nor understanding,
they walk about in darkness;
all the foundations of the earth are shaken.
6 I said, “You are gods,
sons of the Most High, all of you;
7 nevertheless, like men you shall die,
and fall like any prince.”
8 Arise, O God, judge the earth;
for you shall inherit all the nations!

Daniel 2:1-23

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream
2 In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; his spirit was troubled, and his sleep left him.
2 Then the king commanded that the magicians, the enchanters, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans be summoned to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. 3 And the king said to them, “I had a dream, and my spirit is troubled to know the dream.” 4 Then the Chaldeans said to the king in Aramaic, “O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation.” 5 The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, “The word from me is firm: if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and your houses shall be laid in ruins. 6 But if you show the dream and its interpretation, you shall receive from me gifts and rewards and great honor. Therefore show me the dream and its interpretation.” 7 They answered a second time and said, “Let the king tell his servants the dream, and we will show its interpretation.” 8 The king answered and said, “I know with certainty that you are trying to gain time, because you see that the word from me is firm— 9 if you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one sentence for you. You have agreed to speak lying and corrupt words before me till the times change. Therefore tell me the dream, and I shall know that you can show me its interpretation.” 10 The Chaldeans answered the king and said, “There is not a man on earth who can meet the king's demand, for no great and powerful king has asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or Chaldean. 11 The thing that the king asks is difficult, and no one can show it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.”
12 Because of this the king was angry and very furious, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon be destroyed. 13 So the decree went out, and the wise men were about to be killed; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them. 14 Then Daniel replied with prudence and discretion to Arioch, the captain of the king's guard, who had gone out to kill the wise men of Babylon. 15 He declared to Arioch, the king's captain, “Why is the decree of the king so urgent?” Then Arioch made the matter known to Daniel. 16 And Daniel went in and requested the king to appoint him a time, that he might show the interpretation to the king.
God Reveals Nebuchadnezzar's Dream
17 Then Daniel went to his house and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, 18 and told them to seek mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery, so that Daniel and his companions might not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. 19 Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a vision of the night. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven. 20 Daniel answered and said:
“Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might.
21 He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding;
22 he reveals deep and hidden things; he knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with him.
23 To you, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and might,
and have now made known to me what we asked of you, for you have made known to us the king's matter.”

November 21

Revelation 18:1-24

The Fall of Babylon
18 After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory.
2 And he called out with a mighty voice,
"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast.
3 For all nations have drunk the wine of the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living."
4 Then I heard another voice from heaven saying,
"Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues;
5 for her sins are heaped high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.
6 Pay her back as she herself has paid back others, and repay her double for her deeds; mix a double portion for her in the cup she mixed.
7 As she glorified herself and lived in luxury, so give her a like measure of torment and mourning, since in her heart she says, 'I sit as a queen, I am no widow, and mourning I shall never see.'
8 For this reason her plagues will come in a single day, death and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for mighty is the Lord God who has judged her."
9 And the kings of the earth, who committed sexual immorality and lived in luxury with her, will weep and wail over her when they see the smoke of her burning. 10 They will stand far off, in fear of her torment, and say, "Alas! Alas! You great city, you mighty city, Babylon! For in a single hour your judgment has come."
11 And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn for her, since no one buys their cargo anymore, 12 cargo of gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine linen, purple cloth, silk, scarlet cloth, all kinds of scented wood, all kinds of articles of ivory, all kinds of articles of costly wood, bronze, iron and marble, 13 cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, fine flour, wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and slaves, that is, human souls.
14 "The fruit for which your soul longed has gone from you, and all your delicacies and your splendors are lost to you, never to be found again!"
15 The merchants of these wares, who gained wealth from her, will stand far off, in fear of her torment, weeping and mourning aloud,
16 "Alas, alas, for the great city that was clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, adorned with gold, with jewels, and with pearls!
17 For in a single hour all this wealth has been laid waste." And all shipmasters and seafaring men, sailors and all whose trade is on the sea, stood far off 18 and cried out as they saw the smoke of her burning, "What city was like the great city?"
19 And they threw dust on their heads as they wept and mourned, crying out, "Alas, alas, for the great city where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! For in a single hour she has been laid waste.
20 Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her!"
21 Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon the great city be thrown down with violence, and will be found no more;
22 and the sound of harpists and musicians, of flute players and trumpeters, will be heard in you no more, and a craftsman of any craft will be found in you no more, and the sound of the mill will be heard in you no more,
23 and the light of a lamp will shine in you no more, and the voice of bridegroom and bride will be heard in you no more, for your merchants were the great ones of the earth, and all nations were deceived by your sorcery.
24 And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all who have been slain on earth."

The Apostles' Creed

The Third Article: Sanctification
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.
What does this mean? 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 Christ 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.

Sunday

Psalm 95:1-7a

Let Us Sing Songs of Praise
95 Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
2 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
3 For the Lord is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
4 In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
5 The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.
6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!
7 For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.
Today, if you hear his voice,

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

The Lord God Will Seek Them Out
11 "For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. 13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. 15 I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. 16I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.
20 "Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.
21 Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, 22 I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. 23 And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. 24 And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the Lord; I have spoken.

Matthew 25:31-46

The Final Judgment
31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'
41 "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' 44 Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' 45 Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' 46 And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

November 22

Christian Questions with Their Answers

Prepared by Dr. Martin Luther for those who intend to go to the Sacrament

Christians may ask themselves these questions:

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner?

Yes, I believe it. I am a sinner.

2. How do you know this?

From the Ten Commandments, which I have not kept.

3. Are you sorry for your sins?

Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.

4. What have you deserved from God because of your sins?

His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation. See Rom. 6:21, 23.

5. Do you hope to be saved?

Yes, that is my hope.

6. In whom then do you trust?

In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Who is Christ?

The Son of God, true God and man.

8. How many Gods are there?

Only one, but there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

9. What has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?

He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

10. Did the Father also die for you?

He did not. The Father is God only, as is the Holy Spirit; but the Son is both true God and true man. He died for me and shed His blood for me.

11. How do you know this?

From the holy Gospel, from the words instituting the Sacrament, and by His body and blood given me as a pledge in the Sacrament.

12. What are the words of institution?

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

13. Do you believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the Sacrament?

Yes, I believe it.

14. What convinces you to believe this?

The word of Christ: Take, eat, this is My body; drink of it, all of you, this is My blood.

15. What should we do when we eat His body and drink His blood, and in this way receive His pledge?

We should remember and proclaim His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.

16. Why should we remember and proclaim His death?

First, so that we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins. Only Christ, true God and man, could do that. Second, so we may learn to be horrified by our sins, and to regard them as very serious. Third, so we may find joy and comfort in Christ alone, and through faith in Him be saved.

17. What motivated Christ to die and make full payment for your sins?

His great love for His Father and for me and other sinners, as it is written in John 14; Romans 5; Galatians 2; and Ephesians 5.

18. Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament?

That I may learn to believe that Christ, out of great love, died for my sin, and also learn from Him to love God and my neighbor.

Continued

Christian Questions with Their Answers continued

19. What should admonish and encourage a Christian to receive the Sacrament frequently?
First, both the command and the promise of Christ the Lord. Second, his own pressing need, because of which the command, encouragement, and promise are given.
20. But what should you do if you are not aware of this need and have no hunger and thirst for the Sacrament?
To such a person no better advice can be given than this: first, he should touch his body to see if he still has flesh and blood. Then he should believe what the Scriptures say of it in Galatians 5 and Romans 7. Second, he should look around to see whether he is still in the world, and remember that there will be no lack of sin and trouble, as the Scriptures say in John 15–16 and in 1 John 2 and 5. Third, he will certainly have the devil also around him, who with his lying and murdering day and night will let him have no peace, within or without, as the Scriptures picture him in John 8 and 16; 1 Peter 5; Ephesians 6; and 2 Timothy 2.
Note: These questions and answers are no child's play, but are drawn up with great earnestness of purpose by the venerable and devout Dr. Luther for both young and old. Let each one pay attention and consider it a serious matter; for St. Paul writes to the Galatians in chapter six: "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked."