

# Walking Together in the Word

Devotions on the Weekly Scripture Readings for February 2023 (Year A)

The purpose of the Chapel Devotion Project is to encourage individuals and families to make prayer and devotional time in God's Word a regular part of their daily lives. We believe many good things will come from your intentional study and reflection of God's Word:

- Your relationship with God and with others will grow and be strengthened.
- Study of the Scripture and hymns for the upcoming weekend will enhance your worship.
- You will come to the Lord daily in prayer, bringing your praise, thanks, and requests to Him.

## *How to Use These Devotions*

Each week contains five pages of devotional material. How you choose to use the material is up to you. You could study one reading or one page a day. You might read several portions every other day. You may use the short order of worship provided below. Use the material in the way that best fits you and your family.

### ORDER OF WORSHIP

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
All: Amen.

### SCRIPTURE READING

### DEVOTION and REFLECTION

### PRAYERS and THE LORD'S PRAYER

#### LUTHER'S MORNING PRAYER

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.

or

#### LUTHER'S EVENING PRAYER

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

Leader: The almighty and merciful God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us.  
All: Amen.

All Scripture from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Hymns used by permission. OneLicense.net #A-725523 LSB Hymn License.net, Lutheran Service Builder.

Devotions and supporting material written by Pastor Ted Laesch and Mary Laesch.

# Walking Together in the Word

January 30-February 4, 2023

*This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, February 5.*

Epiphany 5

## The Gospel: Matthew 5:13–20

13 “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

14 “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19 Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

## Devotion on the Gospel

Salt and light. That’s what Jesus calls you and me in the Sermon on the Mount. Last week Jesus showed us in the Beatitudes that we are uniquely blessed. Oh, how blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. God blesses us in unique ways. Christian people are very different from the world.

But when Jesus says that not only are we blessed, but we are also salt and light, He is showing that not only are we different, but our uniqueness is meant to make a difference in our world. It’s one thing to be different. It’s another thing to make a difference.

And what does the salt of the earth share with a spiritually hurting world? What does the light of the world shine on this sinful and corrupt place? There’s only one thing: Jesus. Jesus who died and who was raised. Jesus who loves you and forgives you. Jesus who accepts you just as you are. Jesus who gives grace to you, shares His mercy with you, gives life to you. That’s what the salt of the earth shares. That’s what the light of the world shares.

And that is what you are. You are salt! You are light! By His grace, God makes you and me to be salt and light. By His forgiveness He gives you and me a new heart to share His love. In His glory He calls you and me to be a shaker of salt and a beacon of light of the Good News that saves.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Verse to Remember:  
Matthew 5:16*

*Why should we “let  
our light shine  
before others”?*

*Remember the song  
“This Little Light of  
Mine, I’m Gonna Let  
It Shine”? Sing it!*

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*God's people were going through the motions of a "good work"—fasting—but nothing good came of it. Instead, God desires that we do good that really matters, such as feeding the hungry and helping the poor.*

*What can you do this week to be light and show love to God and others?*

## The Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 58:3–9a

'Why have we fasted,' they say,  
'and you have not seen it?  
Why have we humbled ourselves,  
and you have not noticed?'  
"Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please  
and exploit all your workers.  
4 Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife,  
and in striking each other with wicked fists.  
You cannot fast as you do today  
and expect your voice to be heard on high.  
5 Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,  
only a day for people to humble themselves?  
Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed  
and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?  
Is that what you call a fast,  
a day acceptable to the Lord?  
6 "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:  
to loose the chains of injustice  
and untie the cords of the yoke,  
to set the oppressed free  
and break every yoke?  
7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry  
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—  
when you see the naked, to clothe them,  
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?  
8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn,  
and your healing will quickly appear;  
then your righteousness will go before you,  
and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.  
9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;  
you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

You will call,  
and the Lord will  
answer

## The Epistle: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12

And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. 2 For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. 3 I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. 4 My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, 5 so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power. 6 We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. 7 No, we declare God's wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. 8 None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 However, as it is written: "What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"— the things God has prepared for those who love him— 10 these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who knows a person's thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.

## The Psalm: Psalm 112:1-9

Praise the Lord.

Blessed are those who fear the Lord,  
who find great delight in his commands.  
2 Their children will be mighty in the land;  
the generation of the upright will be blessed.  
3 Wealth and riches are in their houses,  
and their righteousness endures forever.  
4 Even in darkness light dawns for the upright,  
for those who are gracious and compassionate and righteous.  
5 Good will come to those who are generous and lend freely,  
who conduct their affairs with justice.  
6 Surely the righteous will never be shaken;  
they will be remembered forever.  
7 They will have no fear of bad news;  
their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the Lord.  
8 Their hearts are secure, they will have no fear;  
in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.  
9 They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor,  
their righteousness endures forever;  
their horn will be lifted high in honor.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*It wasn't Paul's persuasive words or wit that created faith in people.*

*What is it that creates faith in people's hearts as they hear God's Word?*

*How will those who "find great delight in His (God's) commands" be blessed?*

**Notes,  
Thoughts,  
Questions**

*We know how we should live and act, but we can't do it on our own.*

*Look for, and underline words and phrases that show how Jesus helps us to love and serve others.*

**The Hymn: May We Thy Precepts, Lord, Fulfill**    *LSB 698*

May we Thy precepts, Lord, fulfill  
And do on earth our Father's will  
As angels do above;  
Still walk in Christ, the living way,  
With all Thy children and obey  
The law of Christian love.

So may we join Thy name to bless,  
Thy grace adore, Thy pow'r confess,  
From sin and strife to flee.  
One is our calling, one our name,  
The end of all our hopes the same,  
A crown of life with Thee.

Spirit of life, of love and peace,  
Unite our hearts, our joy increase,  
Thy gracious help supply.  
To each of us the blessing give  
In Christian fellowship to live,  
In joyful hope to die.

Public domain

Unite our  
hearts, our  
joy  
increase

# Faith + Life Connections

As you read the Gospel again, enjoy some popcorn—both salted and unsalted. Which tastes better? Salt helps some foods taste better. Talk about how we can positively affect the world with our faith. How do God's blessings to us prepare us to go and be salt and light to the world?

*Matthew 5:13–20*

God wants His people to be a light to the world, shining the light of His love to others. How can you do that this week? Donate food to a food pantry or help at one? Care for someone older or younger than you? Take time to visit and listen to a friend?

*Isaiah 58:3–9a*

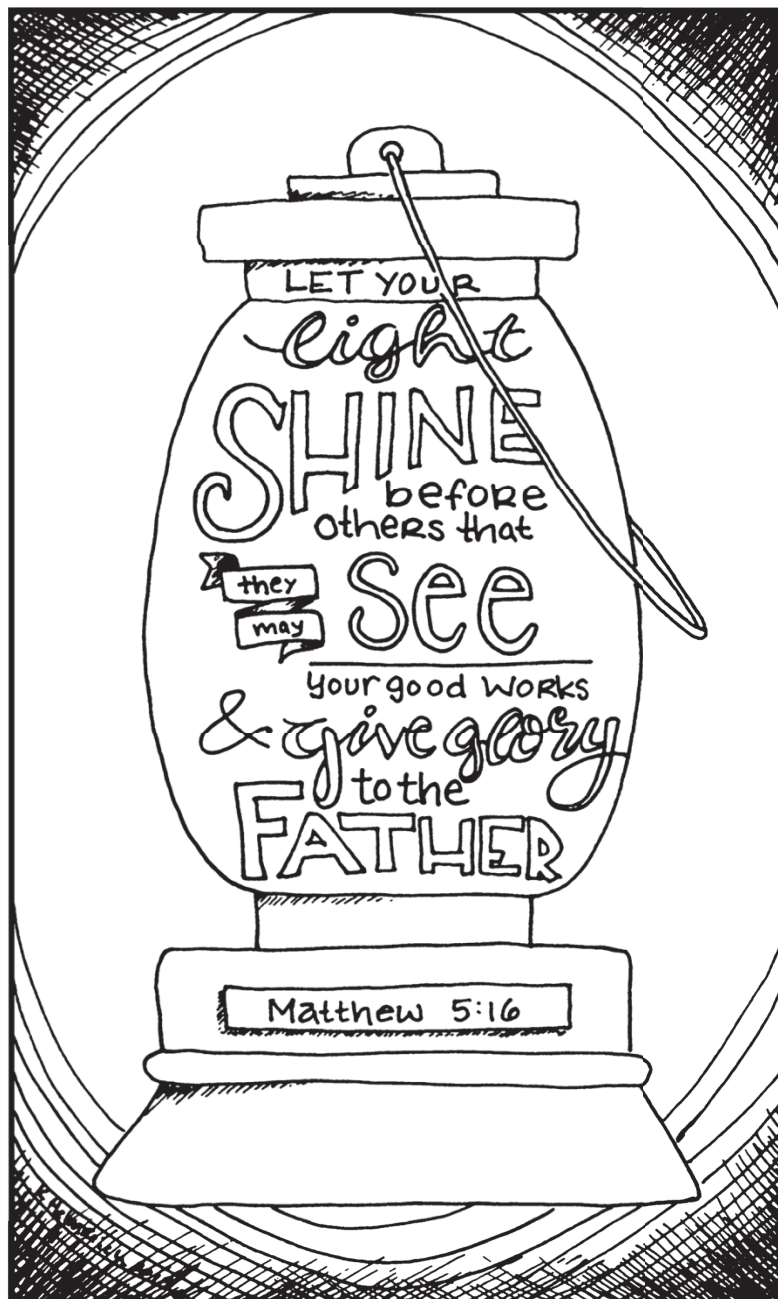
It's hard to always do God's will, isn't it? Children don't always like obeying their parents. Adults don't always like serving others. We need God's help to do what's right! Pray for God to help. He will help, and give us joy too!

*LSB Hymn 698*

**Memorize:**

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

Matthew 5:16



Coloring pages from [visualfaithmin.org](http://visualfaithmin.org)

**Devote Yourselves to Prayer** *Colossians 4:2*

Throughout the week, write prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and requests on slips of paper and place them in your prayer bowl. Take turns praying when you gather for devotions.



# Walking Together in the Word

February 6–February 11, 2023

*This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, February 12.*

Epiphany 6

## The Gospel: Matthew 5:21–37

21 “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ 22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell. 23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. 25 “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. 26 Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. 31 “It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32 But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery. 33 “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ 34 But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. 36 And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. 37 All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

## Devotion on the Gospel

“If your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out...if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off...” What a harsh proclamation of Jesus! Does He mean that if my eye looks at unclean things I should have it taken out? Does He mean that if my tongue is always criticizing and gossiping, I should cut the thing out? Does He mean that if my hand takes something that isn’t mine, I should cut it off?

Because we know Jesus and what the rest of what Scripture teaches, we know He is not saying those things at all (what a relief!). The remedy of removing a sinful thought or action is not to cut off the hand or gouge out the eye. The trouble is not with the hand or eye. The trouble is that we have hearts that are warped and made crooked by sin and that affects what we think and say and do.

It’s why David prays in Psalm 51, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.” Jesus is the Master Surgeon. He opens our heart and removes the sin and guilt, the evil thoughts and desires and words and deeds, and He heals it with His love and His grace and His forgiveness. And then He gives us the power to live a new life—to live His way—to live life as His new creation, ready to do His will.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Do these words of Jesus surprise you? We sometimes forget that God demands perfection, and not one of us can be perfect. Only Jesus fulfilled the Law perfectly, on our behalf. So does that let us off the hook? Think and talk about it.*

*Look up Psalm 51. Pray this psalm of repentance; then thank God for His loving forgiveness and renewal.*



## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*These are the words that Moses spoke to the Israelites before they crossed the Jordan River and entered the Promised Land.*

*Verses to Remember:  
Deuteronomy 30:19-20*

*How do these words speak to us, and to our culture, today?*

*Even in Bible times, people got star-struck and started following high-profile people instead of God.*

*Why is God the only One we should follow and put all our trust in?*

### **The Old Testament Reading: Deuteronomy 30:15-20**

15 See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. 16 For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

17 But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, 18 I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

19 This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live 20 and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and hold fast to Him.  
For the Lord is your life.

### **The Epistle: 1 Corinthians 3:1-9**

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. 3 You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? 4 For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not mere human beings?

5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. 6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. 7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. 8 The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. 9 For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building.

## The Psalm: Psalm 119:1-8

Blessed are those whose ways are blameless,  
who walk according to the law of the Lord.

2 Blessed are those who keep his statutes  
and seek him with all their heart—

3 they do no wrong  
but follow his ways.

4 You have laid down precepts  
that are to be fully obeyed.

5 Oh, that my ways were steadfast  
in obeying your decrees!

6 Then I would not be put to shame  
when I consider all your commands.

7 I will praise you with an upright heart  
as I learn your righteous laws.

8 I will obey your decrees;  
do not utterly forsake me.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*We are blessed when we follow God's commands, but verses 5 and 8 remind us that we depend on God to help us.*

*Say a prayer, asking God to help you follow and obey.*



## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Ebenezer means "stone of help" and is taken from 1 Samuel 7:12, when the prophet Samuel "took a stone, and set it up between Mizpeh and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer; for he said, 'Till now the Lord has helped us.'"*

*How has the Lord helped you?*

## The Hymn: Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing *LSB 686*

Come, Thou Fount of ev'ry blessing,  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
Call for songs of loudest praise.  
While the hope of endless glory  
Fills my heart with joy and love,  
Teach me ever to adore Thee;  
May I still Thy goodness prove.

Here I raise my Ebenezer,  
Hither by Thy help I've come;  
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,  
Safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
Wand'ring from the fold of God;  
He, to rescue me from danger,  
Interposed His precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be;  
Let that grace now, like a fetter  
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee:  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;  
Prone to leave the God I love.  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.

Oh, that day when freed from sinning,  
I shall see Thy lovely face;  
Clothed then in the bloodwashed linen,  
How I'll sing Thy wondrous grace!  
Come, my Lord, no longer tarry;  
Take my ransom'd soul away;  
Send Thine angels soon to carry  
Me to realms of endless day.

Public domain.

Here  
I  
Raise  
My  
Ebenezer

# Faith + Life Connections

Ask most people if they've broken the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment, and they'll likely say, "No way! I've never killed anyone!" But Jesus explains what that, and the rest of God's rules, really mean. Anger = disobedience = eternal punishment. Impure thoughts = disobedience = eternal punishment. What hope do we sinful people have? Only faith in Jesus. He forgives and helps us obey.

*Matthew 5:21-37*

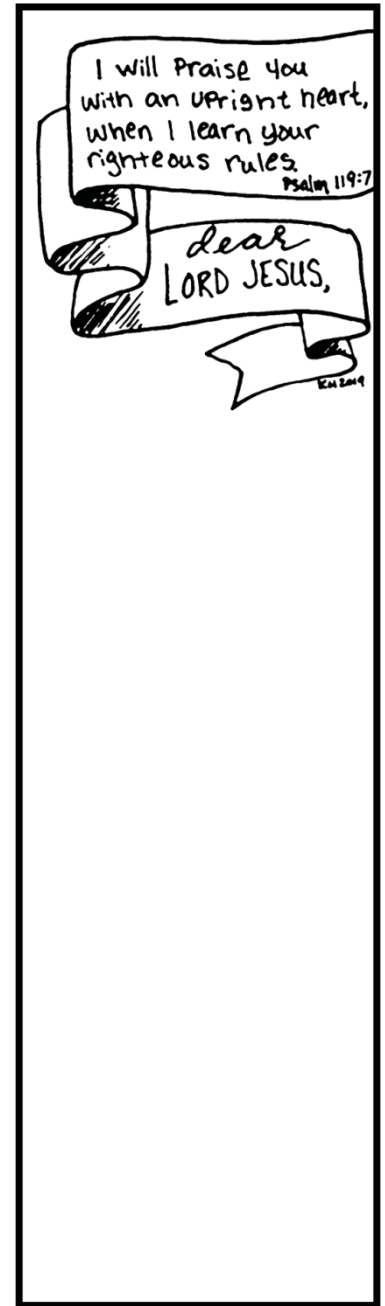
Make and decorate a sign that says, "Choose life! The Lord is your life." How do we choose life? By putting all our trust in God, following and loving Him above all.

*Deuteronomy 30:15-20*

Find a rock that stands upright. Use colored permanent markers to decorate and write "The Lord is my helper" on it. Set it on your table as a reminder of God's love and help to you.

*LSB Hymn 686*

Memorize: "Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to Him. For the Lord is your life." Deuteronomy 30:19-20



Coloring pages from [visualfaithmin.org](http://visualfaithmin.org)

Devote Yourselves to Prayer *Colossians 4:2*

Throughout the week, write prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and requests on slips of paper and place them in your prayer bowl. Take turns praying when you gather for devotions.



# Walking Together in the Word

February 13–February 18, 2023

*This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, February 19.*

## Transfiguration

### The Gospel: Matthew 17:1–9

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

4 Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”

6 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. 7 But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” 8 When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

9 As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed them, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen, until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

### Devotion on the Gospel

In the Bible, clouds have significant meaning, because usually, a cloud is much more than just a cloud. Clouds are symbols of God’s presence. Remember how God spoke with Moses? Once from a burning bush, but after that, it was always through a cloud. There was also the cloud that descended on the Tabernacle as the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness. It was the cloud of God’s presence. God’s presence was also made known by that pillar or cloud that led those people through the desert.

Here in Matthew 17, once again God visits in a cloud. While Jesus was praying with Peter, James, and John on the mountain, a cloud descended—a cloud filled with the presence of God. And Jesus was transfigured right before the disciples’ eyes. He began to glow with the glory of God. No wonder the disciples were filled with awe and wonder and terror. They were left shocked and shaking on the ground because they were in the presence of Almighty God!

But please notice, when this holy, supernatural, power-filled Christ sees the fear of His disciples, He touches them and says, “Don’t be afraid.” And they look up and see only Jesus. Just Jesus, the friend and teacher they loved. The Messiah is their personal friend. The glorified God is the One they know. The Almighty God is their companion.

What a comforting thought that the Almighty God, the Maker of the universe, loves us so much that He would stoop down to us to be our friend, to be our companion. Our God is all powerful, mighty, glorious, and yet He’s never far off. He’s with us always. That all-powerful, almighty, all-glorious God—that God loves you and me. He walks with us in all that we do. He is our companion. The Almighty God is our friend.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Where else in Scripture have you heard these words that God the Father proclaimed about Jesus? See Matthew 3:13–17.*

*How has God’s Word lovingly touched you when you were afraid?*

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*God made a covenant with His people, but He already knew they would not be able to keep it. What do you think the blood represented, or pointed toward? See Leviticus 17:11 and Hebrews 9:11-28.*

### **The Second Reading: Exodus 24:8-18**

Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words." 9 Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up 10 and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky. 11 But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank. 12 The Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone with the law and commandments I have written for their instruction." 13 Then Moses set out with Joshua his aide, and Moses went up on the mountain of God. 14 He said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Aaron and Hur are with you, and anyone involved in a dispute can go to them." 15 When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it, 16 and the glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai. For six days the cloud covered the mountain, and on the seventh day the Lord called to Moses from within the cloud. 17 To the Israelites the glory of the Lord looked like a consuming fire on top of the mountain. 18 Then Moses entered the cloud as he went on up the mountain. And he stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

### **The Epistle: 2 Peter 1:16-21**

For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." 18 We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. 19 We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. 20 Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. 21 For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

*Verse to Remember:  
2 Peter 1:21*

“This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased.”



## The Psalm: Psalm 2:6-12

"I have installed my king  
on Zion, my holy mountain."  
7 I will proclaim the Lord's decree:  
He said to me, "You are my son;  
today I have become your father.  
8 Ask me,  
and I will make the nations your inheritance,  
the ends of the earth your possession.  
9 You will break them with a rod of iron;  
you will dash them to pieces like pottery."  
10 Therefore, you kings, be wise;  
be warned, you rulers of the earth.  
11 Serve the Lord with fear  
and celebrate his rule with trembling.  
12 Kiss his son, or he will be angry  
and your way will lead to your destruction,  
for his wrath can flare up in a moment.  
Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*This psalm both announces the kingship of David over Israel, and also points forward to the coming Messiah, Jesus, who would be a descendant of David.*

*How do we "take refuge" in the Lord?*





**Notes,  
Thoughts,  
Questions**

*It's hard to imagine what the disciples experienced when Jesus transfigured before their eyes. But one day, we will also see Jesus in all His glory with our own eyes!*

*What do you imagine that will be like?*

**The Hymn: O Wondrous Type! O Vision Fair**    *LSB 413*

O wondrous type! O vision fair  
Of glory that the Church may share,  
Which Christ upon the mountain shows,  
Where brighter than the sun He glows!

With Moses and Elijah nigh  
The incarnate Lord holds converse high;  
And from the cloud the Holy One  
Bears record to the only Son.

With shining face and bright array  
Christ deigns to manifest today  
What glory shall be theirs above  
Who joy in God with perfect love.

And faithful hearts are raised on high  
By this great vision's mystery,  
For which in joyful strains we raise  
The voice of prayer, the hymn of praise.

O Father, with the eternal Son  
And Holy Spirit ever one,  
We pray Thee, bring us by Thy grace  
To see Thy glory face to face.

Public domain

We pray Thee, bring us  
by Thy grace  
To see Thy glory  
face to face.

# Faith + Life Connections

Go on an evening walk with a flashlight, play flashlight tag together, or light a candle in a darkened room. See how the light illuminates the darkness. Now imagine Jesus bright white and dazzling, as He displayed His divine glory. Jesus is the light that came into the world to save us.

*Matthew 17:1-9*

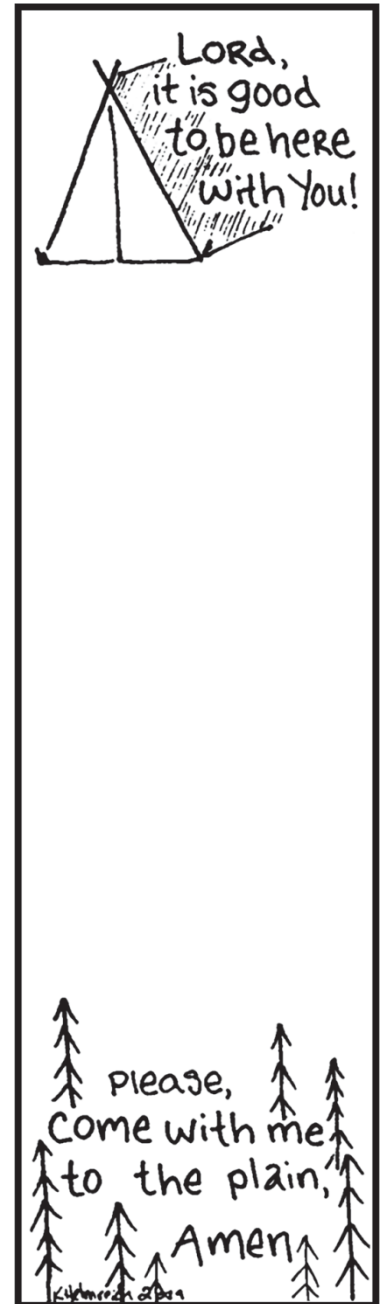
Think about how important it is to have an “eye-witness” of an event. Whether it’s a crime or something incredible that’s happened, people are more likely to believe someone who has seen it first-hand. Peter saw Jesus’ glory first-hand. He also saw Jesus risen from the dead and alive—so did more than 500 others (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-8).

*2 Peter 1:16-21*

There aren’t many places in this world we can go to for the truth. But we can trust that God’s Word is truth.

*2 Peter 1:16-21*

**Memorize:** “For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”  
*2 Peter 1:21*



Coloring pages from [visualfaithmin.org](http://visualfaithmin.org)

**Devote Yourselves to Prayer** *Colossians 4:2*

Throughout the week, write prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and requests on slips of paper and place them in your prayer bowl. Take turns praying when you gather for devotions.



# Walking Together in the Word

February 20–February 25, 2023

*This devotional material is based on Bible readings for Sunday, February 26.*

Lent 1

## The Gospel: Matthew 4:1–11

### Jesus Is Tested in the Wilderness

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted[a] by the devil. 2 After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. 3 The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” 4 Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

5 Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 6 “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “‘He will command his angels concerning you,

and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” 7 Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 9 “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.”

10 Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

11 Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

## Devotion on the Gospel

Temptation has an enemy. In fact, the greatest enemy of temptation is three little words. Did you hear them in Matthew’s Gospel? Three little words: “It is written.”

That is the defense that Jesus used repeatedly against the devil. The devil tries to tempt Him. Jesus says, “It is written.” The devil tries again. Jesus again says, “It is written.” The devil tries a third time! A third time, Jesus says, “It is written!”

Three little words can take down that devil. Jesus said it. We can say it too! Devil, you cannot stand against these words: It is written. When we know and believe the Word of God, we have all that we need.

Remember what St. John wrote? Near the end of his Gospel, John wrote: “These things have been written so that you may know that Jesus is the Christ and that by believing in Him you may have life in His name” (John 20:31).

It is written! The Gospel is clear. It is rock solid. It is sure. It is certain. And it is written so that we might believe and it is written that we might have life. And with those three little words, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can resist the devil’s evil temptations.

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*Does this event remind you of another wilderness experience? See Deuteronomy 8:1-5. Jesus met the test that the Israelites had failed.*

*When we are tempted, we can go to God’s Word for strength to overcome temptation. Take a few minutes to choose several verses that you can turn to in times of temptation. Mark them in your Bible.*

*Suggestions:  
1 Corinthians 10:13;  
Hebrews 4:14-16*

## Notes, Thoughts, Questions

*The first temptation led to the first sin. Look back to the Gospel and compare the way Jesus responded to the tempter with the way Eve responded.*

*Eve added to God's Word ("you must not touch it"), then yielded to the temptation to doubt God's loving will for the people He created.*

*Do we ever try to add to God's Word?*

*Do we ever doubt God's loving will for us?*

### **The Old Testament Reading: Genesis 3:1-21**

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" 2 The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, 3 but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" 4 "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. 5 "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

10 He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

11 And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

12 The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, 'Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.'"

16 To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

17 To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' 'Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. 18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. 19 By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.'"

20 Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

21 The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

## **The Epistle: Romans 5:12-19**

### **Death Through Adam, Life Through Christ**

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned—  
13 To be sure, sin was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not charged against anyone's account where there is no law. 14 Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who is a pattern of the one to come.

15 But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! 16 Nor can the gift of God be compared with the result of one man's sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. 17 For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!

18 Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

## **The Psalm: Psalm 32:1-7**

Blessed is the one

whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

2 Blessed is the one

whose sin the Lord does not count against them  
and in whose spirit is no deceit.

3 When I kept silent,

my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.

4 For day and night

your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped  
as in the heat of summer.

5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you

and did not cover up my iniquity.

I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."

And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

6 Therefore let all the faithful pray to you

while you may be found;  
surely the rising of the mighty waters  
will not reach them.

7 You are my hiding place;

you will protect me from trouble  
and surround me with songs of deliverance.

## **Notes, Thoughts, Questions**

*Have you heard people say, "People are naturally good"? How do these verses expose the falseness of that statement?*

*But God did not leave us hopeless. What did God do for sinful humanity?*

*Verse to Remember:  
Psalm 32:5*

**Notes,  
Thoughts,  
Questions**

Look online for "He Will Hold Me Fast" by Keith and Kristin Getty and listen to this song of comfort.

Your Savior loves you. He will never let you go.

**The Hymn: He Will Hold Me Fast—Getty**

When I fear my faith will fail  
Christ will hold me fast  
When the tempter would prevail  
He will hold me fast  
I could never keep my hold  
Through life's fearful path  
For my love is often cold  
He must hold me fast

*Chorus*

He will hold me fast  
He will hold me fast  
For my Savior loves me so  
He will hold me fast

Those He saves are His delight  
Christ will hold me fast  
Precious in His holy sight  
He will hold me fast  
He'll not let my soul be lost  
His Promises shall last  
Bought by Him at such a cost  
He will hold me fast

For my life He bled and died  
Christ will hold me fast  
Justice has been satisfied  
He will hold me fast  
Raised with Him to endless life  
He will hold me fast  
Till our faith is turned to sight  
When He comes at last

CCLI Song # 7016161  
Ada Ruth Habershon | Matthew Merker  
© 2013 Getty Music Publishing (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.)  
Matthew Merker Music (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.)  
For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com  
CCLI License # 11301522

For  
my  
Savior  
loves  
me  
so



# Faith + Life Connections

Think and talk about what it means to be *tempted*. Look up the definition in a dictionary. What are some things or situations that tempt you? What do you do when you are tempted to do something you know is wrong? Walk away? Read the Bible? Pray? God promises to help us resist when we are tempted.

*Matthew 4:1-11*

Read the account of man's fall into sin from a Bible storybook. Then read about Jesus' death and resurrection. Adam brought sin and death into the world. Christ brought forgiveness and new life.

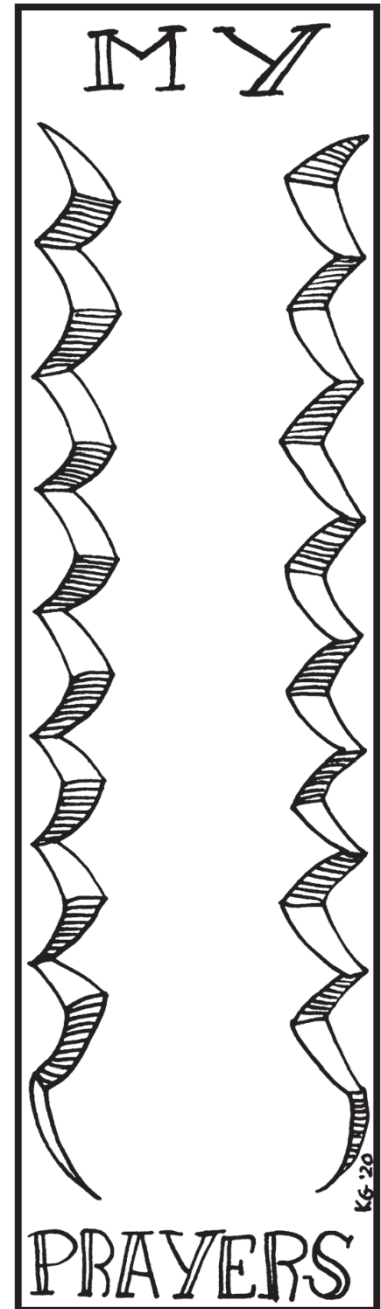
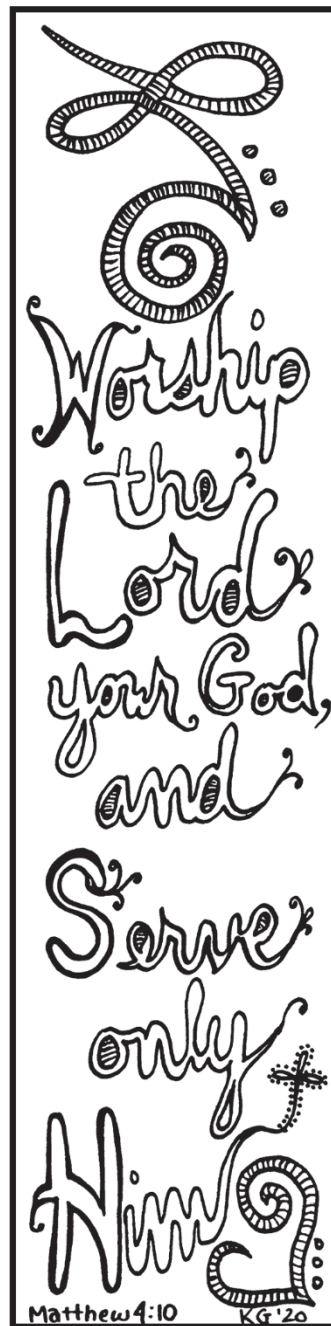
*Genesis 3:1-21*

There is another familiar song that tells of God's great love for us in our Savior, Jesus. Sing "Jesus Loves Me, This I Know." Your Savior loves you. He died and rose for you. And He will come again to take you home to be with Him.

*Hymn: He Will Hold Me Fast*

**Memorize:**

"I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.' And you forgave the guilt of my sin."  
Psalm 32:5



Coloring pages from [visualfaithmin.org](http://visualfaithmin.org)

**Devote Yourselves to Prayer** *Colossians 4:2*

Throughout the week, write prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and requests on slips of paper and place them in your prayer bowl. Take turns praying when you gather for devotions.



