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GOSPEL READING: Matthew 12:1-8 1 At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. 2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." 3 He said to them, "Have you not read what
David did, when he was hungry, and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? 5 Or have you not read in the law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are guiltless? 6 I
tell you, something greater than the temple is here. 7 And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. 8 For the Sabbath" require of us? Or better yet, what is the primary intention behind
this command? The religious leaders confronted Jesus on this issue. The "Sabbath rest" was meant to be a time to remember and celebrate God's goodness of his work, both in creation, and his saving actions on our behalf. It was intended to bring
everyday work to a halt and to provide needed rest and refreshment. Mercy and not sacrifice Jesus' disciples are scolded by the scribes and Pharisees, not for plucking and eating corn from the fields, but for doing so on the Sabbath. In defending his disciples, Jesus argues from the Scriptures that human need has precedence over ritual custom. In
their hunger, David and his men ate of the holy bread offered in the Temple. Jesus also quoted of the Sabbath work involved in worship on weekdays. Jesus then quotes from the prophet Hosea (6:6): I desire mercy, and not sacrifice. While the claims of ritual sacrifice are
important to God, mercy and kindness in response to human need are even more important. Do you honor the Lord in the way you treat your neighbor and celebrate the Lord's Day? Lord, make us to walk in your way: Where there is neither fear nor ignorance; where there is patience and humility, there is neither anger nor
annoyance; where there is poverty and joy, there is neither greed nor avarice; where there is neither care nor restlessness; where there is mercy and prudence, there is neither excess nor harshness; this we know through your Son, Jesus
Christ our Lord. (Prayer of Francis of Assisi, 1182-1226) Psalm 116:12-19 12 What shall I render to the LORD in the presence of all his people. 15 Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints. 16 O LORD, I
am your servant; I am your servant, the son of your handmaid. You have loosed my bonds. 17 I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the presence of all his people, 19 in the courts of the house of the LORD, in your midst, O Jerusalem. Daily Quote from the Early Church
Fathers: The Seventh Day, from the early Greek fathers, attributed to Eusebius of Alexandria (5th century AD) "Now every week has seven days. Six of these God has given to us for work, and one for prayer, rest, and making reparation for our sins, so that on the Lord's Day we may atone to God for any sins we have committed on the other six days.
Therefore, arrive early at the church of God; draw near to the Lord and confess your sins to him, repenting in prayer and do not leave before the dismissal. Contemplate your master as he is broken and distributed, yet not consumed. If you have a clear conscience, go
forward and partake of the body and blood of the Lord." (excerpt from SERMON 6, 1-2) Page 2 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 12:14-21 14 But the Pharisees went out and took counsel against him, how to destroy him. 15 Jesus, aware of this, withdrew from there. And many followed him, and he healed them all, 16 and ordered them not to make him
known. 17 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: 18 "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall proclaim justice to the Gentiles. 19 He will not break a bruised
reed or quench a smoldering wick, till he brings justice to victory; 21 and in his name will the Gentiles hope." Meditation: How do we achieve success and victory in our lives? In everyone's life there are key moments or turning points on which the whole of one's life hinges. The mounting confrontation between the Pharisees and Jesus was such a
decisive event and crisis. The religious leaders became intolerant of Jesus because of their prejudice. Nothing that Jesus would do or say from this point on would be right in their eyes. They conspired, not simply to oppose Jesus but to eliminate him. Courage and determination to do God's will Jesus met this defiance with courage and determination to
do his Father's will. He used the crisis to teach his disciples an important lesson for God's way to success and victory. The only way to glory in God's kingdom is through the cross of suffering and humiliation - which Jesus endured for our sake and for our sak
envy, pride, strife, and hatred - and to lay down our lives in humble service and love for one another, just as Jesus did for our sake. Matthew quotes from the "Suffering Servant" prophecies of Isaiah to explain how Jesus the Messiah would accomplish his mission - not through crushing power - but through love and sacrificial service (Isaiah 42:1-4). In
place of a throne Jesus chose to mount the cross and wear a crown of thorns. He was crucified as our Lord and King (John 19:19; Philippians 2:11) There is no greater proof of God's love for us than the sacrificial death of his only begotten Son for our sake and our salvation (John 3:16). Jesus died not only for the Jesus died not only f
well. Isaiah had prophesied centuries before, that the Messiah would bring justice to the Gentiles. To the Greek mind, justice involved giving to God and to one's fellow citizen that which is their due (whatever is owed to them). Jesus taught his disciples to give God not only his due, but to love him without measure just as he loves us unconditionally
without limits or reservation. Justice tempered with love and mercy Jesus brings the justice of God's kingdom tempered with divine love and mercy. He does not discourage the fainthearted but gives hope, courage, and the strength to
persevere through trying circumstances. No trials, failings, and weaknesses can keep us from the mercy and help which Jesus offers to everyone who asks. His grace is sufficient for every moment, every situation, and every challenge we face. When you meet trials and difficulties, do you rely on God's help and grace? Lord Jesus, your love and mercy
knows no bounds. Give me strength when I am weak, hope when I am discouraged, peace when I am troubled, consolation when I am sad, and understanding when I am perplexed. Make me an instrument of your love and peace to those who are troubled and without hope. Psalm 136:1,10-15,23-24 1 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his
steadfast love endures for ever; 10 to him who smote the first-born of Egypt, for his steadfast love endures for ever; 12 with a strong hand and outstretched arm, for his steadfast love endures for ever; 13 to him who divided the Red Sea in sunder, for his steadfast
love endures for ever; 14 and made Israel pass through the midst of it, for his steadfast love endures for ever; 23 It is he who remembered us in our low estate, for his steadfast love endures for ever; 24 and rescued us from our foes, for his steadfast love
endures for ever; Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: The Savior's meekness, by John Chrysostom (347-407 AD) "The prophet celebrated in advance both the Savior's meekness right alongside his unspeakable power. Thereby he opened to the Gentiles a great and effective door. Isaiah also foretold the ills that were to overtake the Jews. He
foreknew the Son's oneness with the Father: 'Israel is my chosen, my soul has accepted him; I have put my Spirit upon him' (Isaiah 42:1). For it is not as an adversary that Christ transcends the law, as if he were an enemy of the Lawgiver, but as though he were of one mind with the Lawgiver and held to the very same purposes. Then, proclaiming the
Lord's meekness, Isaiah said, 'He shall not cry nor lift up his voice' (Isaiah 42:20). For his desire indeed was to enable healing in their presence. But since they pushed him away, he did not contend any further against their opposition." (excerpt from THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, HOMILY 40.2.1) Page 3 GOSPEL READING: Luke 10:38-42 38 Now as
they went on their way, he entered a village; and a woman named Martha received him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving; and she went to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her
then to help me." 41 But the Lord answered her, "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; 42 one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion, which shall not be taken away from her." Meditation: Does the peace of Christ reign in your home and in your personal life? Jesus loved to visit the home of Martha and Mary
and enjoyed their gracious hospitality. In this brief encounter we see two very different temperaments in Martha and Mary, Martha loved to serve, but in her anxious manner of waiting attentively at his feet. She instinctively knew that what the Lord and
Teacher most wanted at that moment was her attentive presence. Give your concerns and pre-occupations to the Lord bids us to give him our concerns and anxieties because he is trustworthy and able to meet any need we have. His grace
frees us from needless concerns and preoccupation. Do you seek the Lord into your home and honored place in your home.
well. We honor the Lord when we offer to him everything we have is an outright gift from God (1 Chronicles 29:14). Paul the Apostle urges us to give God glory in everything we have is an outright gift from God (1 Chronicles 29:14).
him" (Colossians 3:17). When you sit, eat, sleep and when you entertain your friends and guests, remember that the Lord Jesus is also the guest of your home. Scripture tells us that when Abraham opened his home and welcomed three unknown travelers, he welcomed three unknown travelers, he welcomed the Lord who blessed him favorably for his gracious hospitality (Genesis 18:1-10;
Hebrews 13:2). The Lord wants us to bring him glory in the way we treat others and use the gifts he has graciously given to us. God, in turn, blesses us with his gracious presence and fills us with joy. Lord Jesus, to be in your presence and fills us with joy. Lord Jesus, to be in your presence and fills us with joy.
attention. Psalm 15:1-5 1 O LORD, who shall sojourn in your tent? Who shall dwell on your holy hill? 2 He who walks blamelessly, and does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right, and speaks truth from his heart; 3 who does not slander with his tongue, and does what is right.
honors those who fear the LORD; who swears to his own hurt and does not change; 5 who does not put out his money at interest, and does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not put out his money at interest, and does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He who does not take a bribe against the innocent. He was a bribe against the innocent take a bribe against the innocent take a bribe against the innocent. He was a bribe against the innocent take a bribe against the innocent take a bribe against take a bribe against the innocent take a bribe against take 
339-397 A.D. "'Virtue does not have a single form. In the example of Martha and Mary, there is added the busy devotion of the one and the pious attention of the pious attention of the pious attention of the pious attention of 
us also strive to have what no one can take away from us, so that not careless but diligent hearing may be granted to us. For even the seeds of the heavenly Word itself are likely to be taken away if they are sowed by the wayside (Luke 8:5,12). Let the desire for wisdom lead you as it did Mary. It is a greater and more perfect work. Do not let service
divert the knowledge of the heavenly Word... Nor is Martha rebuked in her good serving, but Mary is preferred because she has chosen the better part for herself, for Jesus abounds with many blessings and bestows many gifts. And therefore the wiser chooses what she perceives as foremost."(excerpt from EXPOSITION OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE
7.83-86) Page 4 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 12:38-42 38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, "Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you." 39 But he answered them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign; but no sign shall be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights
in the belly of the whale, so will the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. 42 The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this
generation and condemn it; for she came from the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. Meditation: What would the Lord Jesus gave a rather stern warning to his generation when they demanded a sign from him. It was characteristic of the Jews that
they demanded "signs" from God's messengers to authenticate their claims. Jesus faulted them for one thing: spiritual adultery was often used in the Scriptures for describing apostasy or infidelity towards God. Signs from God When the religious leaders pressed Jesus to give proof for his claims to be the Messiah sent from God,
he says in so many words that he is God's sign and that they need no further evidence from heaven than his own person. The Ninevites recognized God's wisdom in Solomon (1 Kings 10:1-9). Jonah was God's sign and his message was the
message of God for the people of Nineveh. Unfortunately the religious leaders of Jesus' day were not content to accept the signs right before their eyes. They had rejected the message of John the Baptist and now they reject Jesus as God's Anointed One (Messiah) and they fail to heed his message. Simeon had prophesied at Jesus' birth that he was
destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is spoken against... that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed (Luke 2:34-35). Jesus confirmed his message with many miracles in preparation for the greatest sign of all - his resurrection on the third day. The Holy Spirit's gift of wisdom and understanding The Lord Jesus,
through the gift of his Holy Spirit, offers us freedom from sin and ignorance, and he gives us wisdom and understanding so that we may grow in knowledge of God and his ways. Do you thirst for God and for the wisdom which comes from above? James the Apostle says that the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason,
full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity (James 3:17). A double-minded person cannot receive this kind of wisdom. If we wish to be wise in God's ways, then we must humble ourselves before him, like attentive students who wish to be wise in God's ways, then we must humble ourselves before him, like attentive students who wish to be wise in God's ways, then we must humble ourselves before him, like attentive students who wish to be wise in God's ways, then we must humble ourselves before him, like attentive students who wish to be wise in God's ways, then we must humble ourselves before him, like attentive students who wish to be wise in God's ways, then we must humble ourselves before him, like attentive students who wish to be wise in God's ways, then we must have been supported by the contract of the contract
one thing alone - God who is the source of all wisdom, goodness, truth, and knowledge. Do you wish to be wise and loving? Ask the Holy Spirit to fill you with the wisdom which comes from above and to free your heart from all that would hinder God's loving action in your life. Lord Jesus, fill me with your Holy Spirit that I may
grow in wisdom and knowledge of your love and truth. Free me from stubborn pride and willfulness that I may wholly desire to do what is pleasing to you. Psalm 50: 5-9, 16-17, 21-23 5 "Gather to me my faithful ones, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!" 6 The heavens declare his righteousness, for God himself is judge! [Selah] 7 "Hear, O my
people, and I will speak, O Israel, I will deliver you, and your God. 8 I do not reprove you for your Sacrifices; your burnt offerings are continually before me. 9 I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." 16 But to the wicked God
says: "What right have you to recite my statutes, or take my covenant on your lips? 17 For you hate discipline, and you cast my words behind you. 21 These things you have done and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself. But now I rebuke you, and lay the charge before you. 22 "Mark this, then, you who forget God, lest I rend, and
there be none to deliver! 23 He who brings thanksgiving as his sacrifice honors me; to him who orders his way aright I will show the salvation of God!" Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: The stumbling block of the cross, from an anonymous early Christian teacher "What is the sign of Jonah? The stumbling block of the cross. So it is not the
disputers of knowledge who will be saved but those who believe true teaching. For the cross of Christ is indeed a stumbling block to those who believe true teaching. For the cross of Christ is indeed a stumbling block to those who believe true teaching. For the cross of Christ is indeed a stumbling block to those who believe true teaching.
who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God' (1 Corinthians 1:23-24). Why do the Jews seek signs and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the cross to both the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the cross to both the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the stumbling block of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the sign of the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the Jews and the Jews and the Greeks seek wisdom? God pointed to the
the stumbling block of foolishness. Those who wish to know the Son of God not through faith but through a demonstration of signs will remain trapped in their disbelief, falling on the stumbling block of his death. It is no small wonder that the Jews, considering the death of Christ, thought he was merely a man, when even Christians - as they purport
to be but really are not - because of his death are reluctant to declare the only begotten, the crucified, as incomparable majesty. (excerpt from INCOMPLETE WORK ON MATTHEW, HOMILY 30) Page 5 Alternate reading: John 20:1-2, 11-18GOSPEL READING: Matthew 12:46-50 46 While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his
brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. 48 But he replied to the man who told him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49 And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother, and mother." Meditation: Who do
you love and cherish the most? God did not intend for us to be alone, but to be with others. He gives us many opportunities for developing relationships with family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Why does Jesus seem to ignore his own relatives when they pressed to see him? His love and respect for his mother and his relatives is unquestionable.
Jesus never lost an opportunity to teach his disciples a spiritual lesson and truth about the kingdom of God. On this occasion when many gathered to hear Jesus he pointed to another higher reality of relationships, namely our relationships, namely our relationship with God and with those who belong to God. God offers the greatest of relationships What is the essence of being
mutual love and unity. God offers us the greatest of relationships - union of heart, mind, and spirit with himself, the very author and source of love (1 John 4:8,16). God's love never fails, never forgets, never lets us down nor disappoints us. His love is consistent, unwavering, unconditional, unrelenting and unstoppable
There is no end to his love. Nothing in this world can make him leave us, ignore us, or withhold from us his merciful love and care (Romans 8:31-39). He will love and care (Romans 8:31-39). He will love us no matter what. It is his nature to love. That is why he created us - to be united with him and to share in his love (1 John 3:1). God is a trinity of divine persons - one in being with the
eternal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - and a community of undivided love. God made us in his image and likeness (Genesis 1:26,27) to be a people who are free to choose what is good, loving, and just and to reject whatever is false and contrary to his love and righteousness (moral goodness). That is why Jesus challenged his followers, and even his own
earthly relatives, to recognize that God is the true source of all relationships. God wants all of our relationships to be rooted in his love and goodness. The heavenly Father's offer of friendship and adoption Jesus Christ is God's love incarnate - God's love made visible in human flesh (1 John 4:9-10). That is why Jesus describes himself as the good
shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep and the shepherd who seeks out the sheep who have strayed and lost their way. God is like the father who yearns for his prodigal son to return home and then throws a great party for his son when he has a change of heart and comes back (Luke 15:11-32). Jesus offered up his life on the cross for our sake
so that we could be forgiven and restored to unity and friendship with God. It is through Jesus that we become the adopted children of God and a member of God - his own sons and daughters. That is why Jesus told his disciples that they would have many new friends and family relationships in his kingdom. Whoever does the will of God is a friend of God and a member of
his family - his sons and daughters who have been ransomed by the precious blood of Christ and adopted as sons and daughters of God.
Those who have been baptized into Jesus Christ and who live as his disciples enter into a new family, a family of "saints" here on earth and in heaven. Jesus changes the order of relationships and shows that true kinship is not just a matter of flesh and blood. Our adoption as sons and daughters of God transforms all of our relationships and requires a
new order of loyalty to God first and to his kingdom of righteousness and peace. Do you want to grow in love and friendship? Allow God's Holy Spirit to transform your heart, mind, and will to enable you to love freely and generously as he loves. Heavenly Father, you bless us with many relationships and you invite us into the community of your sons
and daughters who have been redeemed by your son, Jesus Christ. Help me to love my neighbor with charity, kindness, compassion, and mercy, just as you have loved me. In all of my relationships, and in all that I do and say, may I always seek to bring you honor and glory. Psalm 85:1-8 1 LORD, you were favorable to your land; you restored the
fortunes of Jacob. 2 You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin. [Selah] 3 You withdrew all your wrath; you turned from your hot anger. 4 Restore us again, O God of our salvation, and put away your indignation toward us! 5 Will you be angry with us for ever? Will you prolong your anger to all generations? 6 Will you not revive
us again, that your people may rejoice in you? 7 Show us your steadfast love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation. 8 Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints, to those who turn to him in their hearts. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: My mother through faith, by by Gregory the Great
(540-604 AD) "If someone can become the brother of the Lord by coming to faith, we must ask how one can become also his mother. We must realize that the one who is Christ's brother and sister by believing becomes his mother. We must realize that the one who is Christ's brother and sister by believing becomes his mother. We must realize that the one who is Christ's brother and sister by believing becomes his mother.
becomes his mother if through one's voice the love of the Lord is generated in the mind of his neighbor. (excerpt from FORTY GOSPEL HOMILIES 3.2) Page 6 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:1-9 1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat there; and
the whole crowd stood on the beach. 3 And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. 4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell on rocky ground, where they had not much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, 6 but when
the sun rose they were scorched; and since they had no root they withered away. 7 Other seeds fell upon thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. 8 Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. 9 He who has ears, let him hear." Meditation: Are you hungry for God's word? Matthew tells us
loudly and clearly than many words. Jesus used the ordinary everyday images of life and nature to point to another order of reality - hidden, yet visible to those who had "eyes to see" and the imaginations of his audience more powerfully than an abstract
presentation could. His parables are like buried treasure waiting to be discovered (Matthew 13:44). Sowing seeds that take root and grow What does the parable about seeds and roots say to us about the kingdom of God? Any farmer will attest to the importance of good soil for supplying nutrients for growth. And how does a plant get the necessary
food and water it needs except by its roots? The Scriptures frequently use the image of fruit-bearing plants or trees to convey the principle of spiritual life and death. Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its
leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit (Jeremiah 17:7-8; see also Psalm 1:3). The shut mind and prejudiced hearer Jesus' parable of the sower is aimed at the hearers of his word. There is there are different ways of accepting God's word and they produce different kinds of fruit accordingly. There is there are different ways of accepting God's word and they produce different kinds of fruit accordingly.
prejudiced hearer who has a shut mind. Such a person is unteachable and blind to what he or she doesn't want to hear. Then there is the shallow hearer. He or she fails to think things out or think them through; they lack depth. They may initially respond with an emotional reaction; but when it wears off their mind wanders to something else. Too
busy and preoccupied to listen Another type of hearer is the person who has many interests or cares, but who lacks the ability to hear or comprehend what is truly important. Such a person is for ever too busy to pray or too preoccupied to study and meditate on God's word. He or she may work so hard that they are too tired to even think of anything
else but their work. Then there is the one whose mind is open. Such a person is at all times willing to listen and to learn. He or she is never too proud or too busy to learn. They listen in order to understand. God gives grace to those who hunger
for God's word? Lord Jesus, faith in your word is the way to wisdom, and to ponder your divine plan is to grow in the truth. Open my eyes to your deeds, and my ears to the sound of your call, that I may understand your will for my life and live according to it. Psalm 71:1-6,15,17 1 In you, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame! 2 In
your righteousness deliver me and rescue me; incline your ear to me, and save me! 3 Be to me a rock of refuge, a strong fortress, to save me, for you are my fort, are my hope, my trust, O LORD, from my youth. 6 Upon
you I have leaned from my birth; you are he who took me from my mother's womb. My praise is continually of you. 15 My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all the day, for their number is past my knowledge. 17 O God, from my youth you have taught me, and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds. Daily Quote from the
the surface and is ready to be snatched up by the birds that come by. Therefore those who have in themselves a mind hardened and, as it were, packed tight do not receive the divine seed but become a well-trodden way for the unclean spirits. These are what is here meant by 'the birds of the heaven.' But 'heaven' we understand to mean this air, in
which the spirits of wickedness move about, by whom, again, the good seed is snatched up and destroyed. Then what are those upon the rock? They have not set their minds to understand the touchstone of the mystery [of communion with Christ]. The reverence
these people have toward God is shallow and rootless. It is in times of ease and fair weather that they practice Christianity, when it involves none of the painful trials of winter. They will not preserve their faith in this way, if in times of tumultuous persecution their soul is not prepared for the struggle." (Excerpt from FRAGMENT 168) Page 7 GOSPEI
READING: Matthew 13:10-17 10 Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" 11 And he answered them, "To you it has been given, and he will have abundance; but from him who has not,
even what he has will be taken away. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 With them indeed see but never perceive. 15 For this people's heartness that he has will be taken away. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 With them indeed see but never perceive. 15 For this people's heartness that he has will be taken away. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 With them indeed see but never perceive. 15 For this people's heartness than the has will be taken away. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 14 With them indeed see but never perceive. 15 For this people's heartness than the has will be taken away. 15 This is why I speak to them indeed see but never perceive. 15 For this people is heartness than the has will be taken away. 16 This is why I speak to the has a speak to the heartness than the has a speak to the has a speak to the has a speak to the heartness than the heartness that the heartness than the heartness than the heartness than the h
to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. Meditation: Do you want to grow in your knowledge of God? Saint Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD) once said: "I believe, in order to understand; and I understand; and I understand; and I understand to hear what you hear, and did not hear what you hear.
God's word with clarity so we can know God better and grow in the knowledge of his love and truth. Jesus, however, had to warn his disciples that not everyone would hear God's word, but not believe, some would see God's actions and miracles
and remain unconvinced. Ironically some of the greatest skeptics of Jesus' teaching and miracles who prided themselves on their knowledge of Scripture, especially on the law of Moses. They heard Jesus' teaching and miracles who prided themselves on their knowledge of Scripture, especially on the law of Moses. They heard Jesus' teaching and miracles who prided themselves on their knowledge of Scripture, especially on the law of Moses.
and his message. How could they "hear and never understand" and "see but never perceive"? They were spiritually blind and deaf because their hearts were closed and their minds were blocked by pride and prejudice. How could a man from Galilee, the supposed son of a carpenter, know more about God and his word, than these experts who devoted
their lives to the study and teaching of the law of Moses? The humble of heart receive understanding There is only one thing that can open a closed, confused, and divided mind - a broken heart and humble spirit! The worddisciple means one who is willing to learn and ready to submit to the wisdom and truth which comes from God. Psalm 119
expresses the joy and delight of a disciple who loves God's word and who embraces it with trust and obedience. "Oh, how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation." (Psalm 119:97
99) Listen with reverence and faith God can only reveal the secrets of his kingdom to the humble and trusting person who acknowledges their need for God and for his truth. The parables of Jesus will enlighten us if we approach them with an open mind and heart, ready to let them challenge us. If we approach God's word with indifference, skepticism
and disbelief, then we, too, may "hear but not understand" and to understand God's word can only take root in a receptive heart that is ready to believe and willing to submit to it with trust and reverence?
Jerome, an early church bible scholar who lived between 342-419 AD, wrote: "You are reading [the Scriptures]? No.Your betrothed is talking to you. It is your betrothed, that is, Christ, who is united with you. He tears you away from the solitude of the desert and brings you into his home, saying to you, 'Enter into the joy of your Master.'" Holy Spirit,
be my teacher and guide. Open my ears to hear God's word and open my eyes to understand God's action in my life. May my heart never grow dull and may my ears never tire of listening to the voice of Christ. Psalm 36:5-10 5 Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. 6 Your righteousness is like the
mountains of God, your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast you save, O LORD. 7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of men take refuge in the shadow of your wings. 8 They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights. 9 For with you is the fountain of life; in your
light do we see light. 10 O continue your steadfast love to those who know you, and your salvation to the upright of heart! Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Ears that refuse to hear, by Hilary of Poitiers (315-367 AD) "Faith perceives the mysteries of the kingdom. A person will make progress in those things he has been immersed in and will
abound with an increase in that progress. But in those things he has not been immersed in, even that which he has shall be taken away from him. In other words, he suffers the loss of the law from the loss of the law. Therefore, gospel faith receives a perfect gift, because it enriches
 with new fruit those things that have been undertaken. But once it is rejected, even the help of one's former means of support is taken away. (excerpt from a commentary ON MATTHEW 13.2) Page 8 Alternate reading: Matthew 20:20-28GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:18-23 18 "Hear then the parable of the sower. 19 When any one hears the word of
the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in his heart; this is what was sown along the path. 20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution
arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. 22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is he who hears the word and understands it; he indeed bears fruit, and yields, in one
case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty." Meditation: How good are you at listening, especially for the word of God? God is ever ready to speak to each of us and to give us understanding of his word. This parable of Jesus is a warning to those who hear and who preach the word of God? What makes us ineffective and unresponsive to
God's word? Preoccupation with other things can distract us from what is truly important and worthwhile. And letting our hearts and minds be consumed with material things can easily weigh us down and draw us away from the treasure that lasts for eternity. Allowing God's word to take root in our heart God's word can only take root in a receptive
heart which is docile and ready to hear what God has to say. One lesson is clear: the harvest is sure. While some seed will fall by the wayside and some fall on shallow ground and never come to maturity, and some be choked to death by the thorns; nonetheless a harvest will come. The seed that falls on good soil, on the heart that is receptive, will reap
abundant fruit. Are you teachable and eager to learn God's truth? And do you allow anything to keep you from submitting to God's word with joy and trusting obedience? Lord Jesus, help me to guard the word you have planted in my heart that no doubt or temptation may keep me from believing and obeying you. May I be fruitful in your service and
may I never fear to speak of you to others and to share with them the good news of the Gospel. Psalm 19:8-11 8 the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. 10 More to
be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: God's word is like good seed sown in the heart, by Jerome (347-420 AD) "And the one sown upon good ground
is he who hears the word, understands it and bears fruit.' Even as on bad ground there were three diverse situations (by the path, upon rocky ground and thirtyfold. Both in one and the other there is a change that takes place in the will, not in
the nature itself. In both the unbelievers and believers it is the heart that receives the seed. 'The wicked one comes,' he says, 'and snatches away what has been sown in his heart.' In the explanation of the good ground, he is the one who hears the word. First we must listen, then
understand; after understanding, we must bear the fruits of good teaching and yield fruit either one hundredfold, sixtyfold or thirtyfold." (excerpt from COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 2.13.23) Page 9 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:24-30 24 Another parable he put before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed
good seed in his field; 25 but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. 26 So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. 27 And the servants of the householder came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then has it weeds?' 28 He said to
them, `An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, `Then do you want us to go and gather them?' 29 But he said, `No; lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but
gather the wheat into my barn." Meditation: What can malicious weed-sowing tell us about the kingdom of God? The image Jesus uses here is a common everyday example of planting, harvesting, and sorting the good fruit from the bad. Weeds can spoil and even kill a good harvest if they are not separated and destroyed at the proper time. Uprooting
them too early, though, can destroy the good plants in the process. Guard God's implanted in our heart Just as nature teaches us patience, so God's patience also teaches us patience also teaches us to guard the word which he has planted in our heart Just as nature teaches us patience, so God's patience also teaches us to guard the word which he has planted in our hearts and to beware of the destructive force of sin and deception which can destroy it. God's word brings life, but Satan, the
father of lies, seeks to destroy the good seed which God plants in the hearts of those who listen to his word. God's judgment is not hasty, but it does come. And in the end, God will separate the evil from the good. Do you allow God's word to take deep
root in your heart? Lord Jesus, may your word take deep root in my heart and may I bear good fruit for your glory. May I hunger for your righteousness now that I may also look forward to the day of judgment with joy rather than with dismay. Psalm 50:1-5, 23 1 The Mighty One, God the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun
to its setting. 2 Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth. 3 Our God comes, he does not keep silence, before him is a devouring fire, round about him a mighty tempest. 4 He calls to the heavens above and to the earth, that he may judge his people: 14 Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High; 15 and
call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me." Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: The Lord sows good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord sows good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart, by Chromatius (died 406 AD) "The Lord clearly points out that he is the sower of good seeds in our heart (died 406 AD
of people, so that each of us according to the seeds sown in us by God may bear spiritual and heavenly fruit." (excerpt from TRACTATE ON MATTHEW 51.1) [Note: Chromatius was an early Christian scholar and bishop of Aquileia, Italy. He was a close friend of John Chrysostom and Jerome. He died in 406 AD. Jerome described him as a "most learned"
and most holy man."] Page 10 GOSPEL READING: Luke 11:1-13 1 He was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples said to him, be ceased, one of his disciples." 2 And he said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. 3 Give us each day our daily bread; 4 and
forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive every one who is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation." 5 And he said to them, "Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; 6 for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him; 7 and he will answer from
 within, `Do not bother me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything'? 8 I tell you, though he will rise and give him whatever he needs. 9 And I tell you, Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will
find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 11 What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; 12 or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to
your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" Meditation: Do you pray with joy and confidence? The Jews were noted for their devotion to prayer was prescribed for three set times a day. And the rabbis had a prayer for every occasion. It was also a custom for rabbis to teach their
that God is both Father in being the Creator and Author of all that he has made, the first origin of everything and transcendent authority, and he is eternally Father (Matthew 11:27). All fatherhood and motherhood is derived from him (Ephesians 3:14-15)
In the Lord Jesus Christ we are spiritually reborn and made new, and we become the adopted children of God (John 1:12-13; 3:3). We can approach God our
expects us to treat our neighbor the same. We can pray with expectant faith and trust in the Father's goodness We can pray with expectant faith because our heavenly Father truly loves each one of us and makes us like
himself. Through his grace and power we can love and serve one another as Jesus taught - with mercy, pardon, and loving-kindness. Do you treat others as they deserve, or do you treat others as they deserve, or do you treat others as they deserve, or do you treat others as Jesus taught - with mercy, pardon, and loving-kindness. Do you treat others as they deserve, or do you treat others as they deserve as they d
wronged us (Matthew 6:14-15). God's grace frees us from every form of anger, resentment, envy, and hatred. Are you ready to forgive others as the Lord Jesus forgives you? Parable of the late night guest What can we expect from God, especially when we recognize that he doesn't owe us anything and that we don't deserve his grace and favor? Jesus
used an illustration from the hospitality customs of his time to show how God is always ready to treat us with the best he has to offer. The rule of hospitality in biblical times required that every guest, whether stranger or friend, be warmly welcomed, refreshed (which often involved the washing of feet), and fed with the best food and drink available. It
didn't matter what time of the day or night the quests might show up, it was your duty to stop what you were doing so you could give the quests the best care and shelter you could provide. If there wasn't adequate sleeping accommodation for both your guests and your family, the family slept outside under the stars. When quests showed up in a
village, the whole community could be prevailed upon to provide whatever was needed. Jesus' parable of the importunate and bothersome neighbor shows a worst case scenario of what might happen when an unexpected guest shows up in the middle of the night! The family awakens, unbolts the locked door to receive the guest, then washes the
guest's feet, and the wife begins to prepare a meal. When the wife discovers that she has no bread to set before the guest, she prevails on her husband to go and get bread from a nearby family, who by now is also asleep with their door bolted shut. In a small village it would be easy for the wife to know who had baked bread that day. Bread was
essential for a meal because it served as a utensil for dipping and eating from the common dishes. Asking for bread from one's neighbor was both a common occurrence and an expected favor. To refuse to give bread would bring shame because it was a sign of inhospitality. God's generosity towards us If a neighbor can be imposed upon and coerced
into giving bread in the middle of the night, will not God, our heavenly Father and provider, also treat us with kind and generous care no matter how troubling or inconvenient the circumstances might appear? Jesus states emphatically, How much more will the heavenly Father give! St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD) reminds us that "God, who does
not sleep and who awakens us from sleep that we may ask, gives much more graciously." The Lord Jesus assures us that we can bring our needs to our heavenly Father who is always ready to give not only what we need, but more than we can bring our needs to our heavenly Father who is always ready to give not only what we may be
filled with the abundance of his provision. Do you approach your heavenly Father in heaven, you have given me a mind to know you, a will to serve you, and a heart to love you. Give me today the grace and strength to embrace your holy will and fill my heart with your love that all my
intentions and actions may be pleasing to you. Help me to be kind and forgiving towards my neighbor as you have been towards me. Psalm 138:1-8 1 I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the angels I sing your praise; 2 I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness;
for you have exalted above everything your name and your word. 3 On the day I called, you answered me, my strength of soul you increased. 4 All the kings of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD, for though the LORD is
high, he regards the lowly; but the haughty he knows from afar. 7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the wrath of my enemies, and your right hand delivers me. 8 The LORD will fulfil his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures for ever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.
Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: The privilege and responsibility of calling God Father, by Cyril of Alexandria (376-444 AD) "For the Savior said, 'When you pray, say, 'Our Father.' And another of the holy Evangelists adds, 'who art in heaven' (Matthew 6:9)... He gives his own glory to us. He raises slaves to the dignity of freedom. He crowns
the human condition with such honor as surpasses the power of nature. He brings to pass what was spoken of old by the voice of the psalmist: 'I said, you are gods, and all of you children of the Most High' (Psalm 82:6). He rescues us from the measure of slavery, giving us by his grace what we did not possess by nature, and permits us to call God
'Father,' as being admitted to the rank of sons. We received this, together with all our other privileges, from him. One of these privileges is the dignity of freedom, a gift peculiarly befitting those who have been called to be sons. He commands us, therefore, to take boldness and say in our prayers, 'Our Father.'"(excerpt from COMMENTARY ON LUKE,
HOMILY 71) Page 11 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:31-3531 Another parable he put before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field; 32 it is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make
nests in its branches." 33 He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven is like leavened." 34 All this Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed he said nothing to them without a parable. 35 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: "I will open my mouth
in parables, I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world." Meditation: What can mustard seed it produced. God's kingdom works in a similar fashion.
It starts from the smallest beginnings in the hearts of men and women who are receptive to God's word. And it works unseen and causes a transformation from within, Hidden power of transformation from within the leaven is another powerful agent of change. A lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough. But when the leaven is another powerful agent of change, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough. But when the leaven is another powerful agent of change, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is, a lump of dough left to itself remains just what it is is a lump of dough left 
is added to it a transformation takes place which produces rich and wholesome bread when heated - the staple of life for humans. God's word has power to transforms us The kingdom of God produces a transformation in those who receive the new life which Jesus Christ offers. When we yield our lives to Jesus Christ and allow his word to take root in
our heart, we are transformed and made holy by the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us. Paul the Apostle says, "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transforming power of the Holy Spirit? Heavenly Father, fill me with your Holy
Spirit and transform me into the Christ-like holiness you desire. Increase my zeal for your greater glory. Psalm 145:8-9,15-18 8 The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made. 15 The
eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. 16 You open your hand, you satisfy the desire of every living thing. 17 The LORD is just in all his doings. 18 The LORD is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth. Daily Ouote from the Early Church Fathers: A small seed produces a great
tree, by John Chrysostom (347-407 AD) "Therefore he brought forward the similitude of this herb, which has a very strong resemblance to the kingdom of heaven. It indeed is 'the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.' Thus he
meant to set forth the most decisive sign of its greatness. 'Even so then shall it also be with respect to the gospel,' he says. For his disciples were weakest of all and least of all. Nevertheless, because of the great power that was in them, it has grown and been unfolded in every part of the world." (excerpt from the THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW,
HOMILY 46.2) Page 12 Alternate readings: John 11:19-27; Luke 10:38-42GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:36-43 36 Then he left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds of the field." 37 He answered, "He who sows the good seed is the Son of man; 38 the field is the world, and
the good seed means the sons of the kingdom; the weeds are the sons of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the close of the age, and the reapers are angels. 40 Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age. 41 The Son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out the sons of the age.
of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, 42 and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear. Meditation: Are you guick to judge the faults of others? Jesus' parable teaches us patience lest we judge
before the time is right. Jesus also warns that there is an enemy who seeks to destroy the good seed of his word before it can be sown in our hearts and corrupt us. Reaping what
we sow in this life Charles Read wrote: "Sow an act and you reap a destiny." In the day of judgment each will reap what he or she has sown in this life. Those who sow good will shine in the kingdom of their Father. They will radiate with the beauty, joy, and fullness of God's
love. Do you allow the love of Jesus Christ to rule in your heart, thoughts, and actions? Lord Jesus, may your all-consuming love rule in my heart and transform my life that I may sow what is good, worthy, and pleasing to you. Psalm 103:6-12 6 The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. 7 He made known his ways to Moses, his
acts to the people of Israel. 8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger for ever. 10 He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor requite us according to our sins, nor require us according to ou
toward those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Let us become friends of Jesus, by Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD) "Now, having discoursed sufficiently to the multitudes in parables, he sends them away and goes to his own house,
where his disciples come to him. His disciples did not go with those he sent away. As many as are more genuine hearers of Jesus first follow him, then having inquired about his house, are permitted to see it. Having come, they saw and stayed with him for all that day, and perhaps some of them even longer. In my opinion, such things are implied in
the Gospel according to John... And if then, unlike the multitudes whom he sends away, we wish to hear Jesus and go to the house and receive something better than the multitudes whom he sends away, we wish to hear Jesus and go to the house and receive something better than the multitudes whom he sends away, we wish to hear Jesus, so that as his disciples come, we may also come to him when he goes into the house. And having come, let us inquire about the
explanation of the parable, whether of the tares of the field, or of any other. (excerpt from the COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 10.1-3) Page 13 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:44-46 44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. 45
 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, 46 who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it. Meditation: What do you treasure above all else and how do you keep it secure? In a peasant community the best safe was often the earth. The man in the parable "went in his joy" to sell
everything he had (Matthew 13:44). Why? Because he found a hidden treasure worth possessing above everything else he had. He did not, however, have enough to buy the treasure at a price we can afford! We can't pay
the full price for the rich and abundant life which God offers us - but when we willingly exchange our life for the life which God offers, we receive a treasure beyond compare. Searching for the greatest treasure of all The pearl of great price also tells us a similar lesson (Matthew 13:45). Pearls in the ancient world came to represent the supremely
valuable. Why would a merchant sell everything for a single pearl of peerless value? No doubt because he was attracted to what he thought was the greatest treasure he could possess for himself. On another occasion Jesus told his disciples, "do not throw your pearls before swine" (Matthew 7:6). Beautiful unblemished pearls were intended to enhance
the beauty and value of those who wore them. Do you recognize and value the hidden treasure of God's kingdom and the peerless pearl which the Lord Jesus offers to all who believe in him? Discovering heavenly treasure of God's kingdom and the peerless pearl which the Lord Jesus offers to all who believe in him? Discovering heavenly treasure of God's kingdom is like stumbling across a hidden treasure of finding the one pearl of great price. When we discover the
kingdom of God we receive the greatest possible treasure - the Lord himself. Selling all that we have to obtain this incomparable treasure bas a special connection to the heart, the place of desire and longing, the place of will and focus.
The thing we most set our heart on is our highest treasure. In this parable what does the treasure of the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the kingdom of heaven refer to? It certainly refers to the heaven refer to the heaven ref
your gold and your precious silver, then you will delight yourself in the Almighty" (Job 22:22-23). Is the Lord the treasure and delight of your kingdom. Help me to set my heart? Lord Jesus, reveal to me the true riches of your kingdom. Help me to set my heart on you alone as the treasure beyond compare with any other. Free my heart of any inordinate desires or attachment to
other things that I may freely give to you all that I have in joy and gratitude for all that you have given to me. May I always find joy and delight in your presence. Psalm 99:5-7,9 5 Extol the LORD our God; worship at his footstool! Holy is he! 6 Moses and Aaron were among his priests, Samuel also was among those who called on his name. They cried
to the LORD, and he answered them. 7 He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud; they kept his testimonies, and the statutes that he gave them. 9 Extol the LORD our God, and worship at his holy mountain; for the LORD our God is holy! Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Finding the pearl of great price, by Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD)
"Now among the words of all kinds that profess to announce truth, and among those who report them, he seeks pearls. Think of the prophets as, so to speak, the pearls that receive the dew of heaven and become pregnant with the word of truth from heaven. They are goodly pearls that, according to the phrase here set forth, the merchant seeks. And
the chief of the pearls, on the finding of which the rest are found with it, is the very costly pearl, the Christ of God, the Word that is superior to the precious letters and thoughts in the law and the prophets. When one finds this pearl all the rest are easily released. Suppose, then, that one is not a disciple of Christ. He possesses no pearls at all, much
less the very costly pearl, as distinguished from those that are cloudy or darkened." (excerpt from COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 18.8) Page 14 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 13:47-53 47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net which was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind; 48 when it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and
sorted the good into vessels but threw away the bad. 49 So it will be at the close of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous, 50 and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth. 51 "Have you understood all this?" They said to him, "Yes." 52 And he said to them, "Therefore every
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scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." 53 And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there. Meditation: What can a story of a dragnet and a great catch of fish tell us about God's kingdom? The two most common ways of fishing in Jesus' time was with a casting-net (or hand-net) which was thrown from the shore and the drag-net or trawl which was let down or cast into the waters from a boat. As the boat moved through the waters the dragnet was drawn into the shape of a great cone which indiscriminately took in all kinds of fish and flotsam and jetsam swept in its path. It usually took several men to haul such a net to shore. Reward and judgment at the end of the age What is Jesus' point here? Just as a drag-net does not or cannot discriminate, so the church does not discriminate between the good and the bad, the useless and the useful. God's kingdom is open to all who will separate the good and the bad and then send them to their respective destinations. Our duty in this present age

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is to gather in all who want to become citizens of God's kingdom here on earth as well as in heaven above. The Lord Jesus, when he comes again at the end of this age, will give to those who believed in him and his way of truth and righteousness a glorified resurrected body and a home in his everlasting kingdom. But for those who refused to follow
the Lord Jesus and his merciful word of truth and righteousness, their destiny will be total separation and loss of joy and happiness with God and his community of redeemed men and women. The Lord Jesus freely offers the treasure of abundant life and everlasting joy to all who believe in him and accept him as their Lord and Savior. Do you yearn for
total peace, joy, and union with God in his everlasting kingdom? Trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of Jesus' parable about a "scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven What is the point of the kingdom of heaven who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven who has been trained for the
Bible) and in instructing others in how to live according to God's commandments and way of holiness. In the Old Testament Ezra was called "the ready scribe of the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and
judgments" (Ezra 7:10). Ezra's heart was set on the kingdom of heaven because he revered God's word and he taught others through example and instruction to love and obey God's word why does Jesus compare a "trained scribe" with a "householder who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old
(Matthew 13:52)? Some people love to store up old prized possessions along with the new? Why not replace the old, especially if the new seems to be better or more useful? Wouldn't a person
want to throw away an old pair of shoes and replace them with a new pair - especially if the old pair became well-worn or torn beyond repair? But, who in his right mind would throw away an old precious jewel or some old gold coins simply because they were ancient and maybe tarnished a bit? Precious gems and gold do not lose their value with age
Like choice vintage wine they increase in value. Jesus' parable of the "old" and the "new" certainly points to the ginning with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and with Moses on Mount Sinai, and with King David - the precursor of the Messiah (Psalm 89:3 and Psalm
110:1). Jesus' parable also points to the "new covenant" which he came to establish through the shedding of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the came to establish through the shedding of his blood on the came to establish through the shedding of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the cross and the anointing of his blood on the
commandments, promises, precepts, and teaching (Psalm 119:14,72,127,162). Do you promise to keep all of God's commands? The Lord gives strength, blessing, and joy to those who treasures of the word of God in the "Old Testament" Scriptures or if we only knew the
treasures of the "New Testament" Scriptures. Both the Old and New Testament Scriptures are given by the same eternal Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was with the Father from the beginning and who was sent from heaven to take on human flesh for our salvation
(John 1:1-3,14). Unity of the Old and New Testaments There is a profound unity between the Old Testament prepares for the New and the New Testament fulfills the Old - the two shed light on each other. The Old Testament prepared the way for the
coming of Jesus Christ as the redeemer of all who would be saved through his sacrifice on the Cld Testament lies hidden in the Old Testament is unveiled in the Old Testament is unveiled in the New Testament lies hidden in the Old Testament lies hidden in the Old Testament Scriptures for his disciples and explained how he came to fulfill what was promised and foreshadowed in the Old Testament lies hidden in the Old Testament l
(Luke 24:27). That is why we read the Old Testament in the light of Christ's saving death and resurrection. Do you revere the word of God in the Scriptures - both old and new - and see their fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ? Lord Jesus Christ? Lord Jesus Christ? Lord Jesus Christ?
Spirit open my ears to hear and understand the word of God in the Scriptures that I may revere and treasure both the Old and the New Testaments which God has prepared for all who desire to enter his kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy. Help me to be a diligent student and faithful disciple of your word. Psalm 84:1-5,10 1 How lovely is your
dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! 2 My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. 3 Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O LORD of hosts! 2 My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. 3 Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O LORD of hosts! 2 My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. 3 Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O LORD of hosts!
your praise! [Selah] 5 Blessed are the men whose strength is in you, in whose heart are the highways to Zion. 10 For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: A scribe who is trained for the
kingdom of heaven, by Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD) "A scribe is one who, through continual reading of the Old and New Testaments, has laid up for himself a storehouse of knowledge. Thus Christ blesses those who have gathered in themselves the education both of the law and of the gospel, so as to 'bring forth from their treasure things both
new and old.' And Christ compares such people with a scribe, just as in another place he says, 'I will send you wise men and scribes' (Matthew 13:54-58 54 and coming to his own country he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did
this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? 55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 57 And they same and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and Judas? 58 And are not his brothers James and James and
except in his own country and in his own house." 58 And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief. Meditation: Are you critical towards others, especially those who are close to you? The most severe critics are often people very familiar to us, a member of our family, a relative, neighbor, student, or worker we rub shoulders
with on a regular basis. Jesus faced a severe testing when he returned to his home town, not simply as the carpenter's son, but now as a rabbi with disciples. It would have been customary for Jesus to go to the synagogue each week during the Sabbath service. His hometown
folks listened with rapt attention on this occasion because they had heard about the miracles he had performed in other towns. What sign would he do in his hometown? Jesus startled them with a seeming rebuke that no prophet or servant of God can receive honor among his own people. The people of Nazareth took offense at him and refused to
listen to what he had to say. They despised his preaching because he was a carpenter from the working class, and a mere layman untrained by religious scholars. They also despised him because of his family background. After all, Joseph was a tradesman as well and Mary had no special social distinctions. Familiarity breeds contempt How easily
familiarity breeds contempt. Jesus could do no mighty works in his hometown because the people who were familiar with him were closed-minded and despised his claim to speak and act in the name of God. If people come together to hate and refuse to understand others different than themselves, then they will see no other point of view than their
own and they will refuse to love and accept others. How do you view those who are familiar to you? With kindness and respect or with a critical and judgmental spirit? The Lord Jesus offers us freedom from sin, prejudice, contempt, and fear. His love and grace sets us free to love others with the same grace and mercy which he has shown to us. Only
Jesus can truly set us free from the worst tyranny possible - slavery to sin and the fear of death. His victory on the cross brings us pardon and healing, and the grace to live holy lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. Do you know the joy and freedom which Christ's love brings to our hearts? Lord Jesus, your love conquers every fear and breaks the
power of hatred and prejudice. Flood my heart with your mercy and compassion, that I may treat my neighbor with the same favor and kindness which you have shown to me. Psalm 81:1-5, 9-10a 1 Sing aloud to God our strength; shout for joy to the God of Jacob! 2 Raise a song, sound the timbrel, 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, an ordinance of the God of Jacob. 5 He made it a decree in Joseph, when he went out over the land of Egypt. 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.
Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Few miracles done because of their unbelief, by Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD) "It seems to me that the production of miracles is similar in some ways to the case of physical things. Cultivation is not sufficient to produce a harvest of fruits unless the soil, or rather the atmosphere, cooperates to this end
And the atmosphere of itself is not sufficient to produce a harvest without cultivation. Only in the first instance did not design things to spring up from the earth bring forth vegetation, with the seed sowing according to its kind and according to its
likeness' (Genesis 1:11). It is just this way in regard to the production of miracles. The complete work resulting in a healing without those being healed exercising faith. Faith, of whatever quality it might be, does not produce a healing without divine power.' (excerpt from the COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 10.19) Page 16 GOSPEL
READING: Matthew 14:1-12 1 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about the fame of Jesus; 2 and he said to his servants, "This is John the Baptist, he has been raised from the dead; that is why these powers are at work in him." 3 For Herod had seized John and bound him and put him in prison, for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; 4
because John said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." 5 And though he wanted to put him to death, he feared the people, because they held him to be a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before the company, and pleased Herod, 7 so that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask
8 Prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a platter." 9 And the king was sorry; but because of his oaths and his guests he commanded it to be given; 10 he sent and had John beheaded in the prison, 11 and his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. 12 And his
disciples came and took the body and buried it; and they went and told Jesus. Meditation: Do you ever feel haunted by a past failure or a guilty conscience and peace with God. Herod had respected and feared John the Baptist as a great
prophet and servant of God. John, however did not fear to rebuke Herod for his adulterous relationship with his brother's wife. He ended up in prison because of Herodias' jealousy. Herod, out of impulse and a desire to please his family and friends, had John beheaded. Now his conscience is pricked when he hears that all the people are going to Jesus
to hear his message of repentance and to see his mighty works. Herod is now haunted by the thought that the prophet he murdered might now be raised from the dead! A sign of vanity and cowardice Unfortunately for Herod, he could not rid himself of sin by ridding himself of the man who confronted him with his sin. Herod's power and influence was
badly flawed. He could take a strong stand on the wrong things when he knew the right. Such a stand, however, was a sign of weakness and cowardice. Where do you get the strength of will and heart to choose what is right and to reject what is bad? God is our help and our strength The Lord Jesus gives grace and help to the humble, to those who
acknowledge their weaknesses and their sinfulness, and who look to God for his mercy and pardon, wisdom and strength. His grace and pardon not only frees us from a guilty conscience, it enables us to pursue holiness in every area of our lives, in our thoughts and intentions as well as our words and actions. Fight fear with faith God's grace enables
us to fight fear with faith and to overcome the temptation to compromise good with evil. Do you rely on God's grace and help to choose his way of holiness and to reject whatever would weaken your faith and loyalty to Jesus Christ? Heavenly Father, form in me the likeness of your Son Jesus that I may imitate him in word and deed. Help me to live the
gospel faithfully and give me the strength and courage I need to not shrink back in the face of hardship and temptation. Psalm 67:1-7 1 May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, [Selah] 2 that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations. 3 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the
peoples praise you! 4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. [Selah] 5 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you! 6 The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us. 7 God has blessed us; let all the peoples praise you! 6 The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us. 7 God has blessed us. 7 God has blessed us. 7 God has blessed us. 8 God, our God, has blessed us. 8 God has blessed us. 9 God; let all the peoples praise you! 6 The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us. 8 God has blessed us. 9 God ha
from the Early Church Fathers: Integrity is a hardship for the morally corrupt, by Peter Chrysologus (400-450 AD) "John aroused Herod by his moral admonitions, not by any formal accusation. He wanted to correct, not to suppress rather than be reconciled. To those who are held captive, the freedom of the one
innocent of wrongdoing becomes hateful. Virtue is undesirable to those who are immoral; holiness is abhorrent to those who are corrupt; frugality runs counter to those who are self-indulgent; mercy is intolerable to those who are cruel, as is loving-
kindness to those who are pitiless and justice to those who are unjust. The Evangelist indicates this when he says, "John said to him, 'It is not lawful for you to have the wife of your brother Philip.'" This is where John runs into trouble. John was
saying what was proper of the law, what was proper of justice, what was proper of salvation and what was proper certainly not of hatred but of love. And look at the reward he received from the ungodly for his loving concern!" (excerpt from SERMONS 127.6-7) [Peter Chrysologus, 400-450 AD, was a renowned preacher and bishop of Ravena in the
5th century] Page 17 GOSPEL READING: Luke 12:13-21 13 One of the multitude said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?" 15 And he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?" 15 And he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?" 15 And he said to him, "Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me." 14 But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?" 15 And he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?" 15 And he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?" 15 And he said to him, "Teacher, bid my brother divide the inheritance with me." 14 But he said to him, "Man, who made me a judge or divider over you?" 15 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 14 But he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 15 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 16 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 17 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 18 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritance with me." 19 And he said to him, "Inheritanc
possessions." 16 And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man brought forth plentifully; 17 and he thought to himself, `What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' 18 And he said, `I will do this: I will be said, `I will do this: I will say to my soul, Soul
you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry.' 20 But God said to him, `Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' 21 So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Meditation: Have you ever tried to settle a money dispute or an
inheritance issue? Inheritance disputes are rarely ever easy to resolve, especially when the relatives or close associates of the deceased benefactor cannot agree on who should get what and who should get the most. Why did Jesus refuse to settle an inheritance dispute between two brothers? He saw that the heart of the issue was not justice or
fairness but rather greed and possessiveness. Loving possessions rather than loving my neighbor. Jesus warned the man who wanted
half of his brother's inheritance to "beware of all covetousness." To covet is to wish to get wrongfully what another possesses or to begrudge what God has given to another. Jesus restates the commandment "do not covet", but he also states that a person's life does not consist in the abundance of his or her possessions. August of Hippo (354-430 AD)
comments on Jesus' words to the brother who wanted more: Greed wants to divide, just as love desires to gather. What is the significance of 'guard against all greed,' unless it is 'fill yourselves with love?' We, possessing love for our portion, inconvenience the Lord because of our brother just as that man did against his brother, but we do not use the
same plea. He said, 'Master, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.' We say, 'Master, tell my brother that he may have my inheritance.' (Sermon 265.9) The fool who was possessed by his riches Jesus reinforces his point with a parable about a foolish rich man (Luke 12:16-21). Why does Jesus call this wealthy landowner a fool? Jesus does
not fault the rich man for his industriousness and skill in acquiring wealth, but rather for his egoism and selfishness - it's mine, all mine, and no one else's. This parable is similar to the parable of the rich man who refused to give any help to the beggar Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). The rich fool had lost the capacity to be concerned for others. His life was
consumed with his possessions and his only interests were in himself. His death was the final loss of his soul! What is Jesus probes
our heart - where is your treasure? Treasure has a special connection to the heart, the place of desire and longing, the place of will and focus. The thing we most set our heart from all possessiveness and from coveting what belongs to another. May I desire you
alone as the one true treasure worth possessing above all else. Help me to make good use of the material blessings you give me that I may use them generously for your glory and for the good of others. Psalm 90:3-6,12-14,17 3 You turn man back to the dust, and say, "Turn back, O children of men!" 4 For a thousand years in your sight are but as
yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it flourishes and is renewed; in the morning: 6 in the morning: 6 in the morning it flourishes and withers. 12 So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. 13 Return, O LORD! How long? Have pity on your
servants! 14 Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. 17 Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us, yes, the work of our hands establish it. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Surrounded by wealth, blind to charity, by Cyril of Alexandria
(376-444 AD) "'What does the rich man do, surrounded by a great supply of many blessings beyond all numbering? In distress and anxiety, he speaks the words of poverty. He says, 'What should I do?' ... He does not look to the future. He does not raise his eyes to God. He does not count it worth his while to gain for the mind those treasures that are
above in heaven. He does not cherish love for the poor or desire the esteem it gains. He does not sympathize with suffering. It gives him no pain nor awakens his pity. Still more irrational, he settles for himself the length of his life, as if he would also reap this from the ground. He says, 'I will say to myself, "Self, you have goods laid up for many years.
Eat, drink, and enjoy yourself." 'O rich man,' one may say, "You have storehouses for your fruits, but where will you receive your many years? By the decree of God, your soul. Whose will these things be that you have prepared?" (excerpt from
COMMENTARY ON LUKE, HOMILY 89) Page 18 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 14:13-21 13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a lonely place apart. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. 14 As he went ashore he saw a great throng; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick
15 When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a lonely place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the willages and buy food for themselves." 16 Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." 17 They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." 18 And he said, "Bring them
here to me." 19 Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass; and taking the five loaves and the two fish he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples gave them to the crowds. 20 And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. 21
And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. Meditation: What can truly satisfy our deepest hunger and longing? Wherever Jesus went multitudes of people gathered to meet him - people from every part of society - rich and poor, professionals and laborers, even social outcasts and pagans. What drew them to Jesus?
Were they simply curious or looking for a healing? Many were drawn to Jesus because they were hungry for God. Jesus' message of God's kingdom and the signs and wonders he performed stirred fresh hope and expectation that God was acting in a new and powerful way to set people free from sin and oppression and to bring them the blessings of his
kingdom. God never rests in caring for our needs Jesus never disappointed those who earnestly sought him out. We see a marvelous example of this when Jesus and his twelve discover a crowd of a few thousand people had already gathered in
anticipation of their arrival! Did Jesus' disciples resent this intrusion on their plan to rest awhile? Jesus certainly didn't - he welcomed them with open-arms. His compassion showed the depths of God's love and care for his people. Jesus spoke the word of God to strengthen them in faith and he healed many who were sick. God multiplies the little we
have to bring great blessing to others As evening approached the disciples wanted Jesus to send the people away. Jesus, instead, commanded his disciples to do what seemed impossible - to feed such a large and hungry crowd when there was no adequate provision in sight? Jesus very likely
wanted to test their faith and to give them a sign of God's divine intervention and favor for his people. Jesus took the little they had - five loaves and two fish and loaves that were leftover show the overflowing generosity of
God's gifts to us - gifts that bring blessing, healing, strength, and refreshment. Bread from heaven to sustain us on our journey Jesus' feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospel accounts (Luke 9:10-17, Mark 6:34-44, John 6:51-58, Matthew 14:13-21). What is the significance of this miracle? The miraculous feeding of
such a great multitude recalled the miraculous provision of food for the people (Exodus 16). The daily provision of food for the people of Israel during their forty years of journeying in the barren wilderness foreshadowed the true heavenly bread which Jesus would pass on to his disciples at
his last supper meal on the eve of his sacrifice on the cross. Jesus makes a claim which only God can make: He is the true bread of heaven that can satisfy the deepest hunger we experience (John 6:32-35). The miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, when Jesus said the blessing, broke and distributed the loaves through his disciples to feed the
multitude, is a sign that prefigures the superabundance of the unique bread of the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper which sustains us on our journey to the five thousand shows the remarkable generosity of God and his great kindness towards us.
When God gives, he gives abundantly. He gives more than we need for ourselves that we may have something to share with others, especially those who lack? Lord
Jesus Christ, you satisfy the deepest longings of our hearts and you feed us with the finest of wheat (Psalm 81:16). Fill me with gratitude for your blessings and give me a generous heart that I may freely share with others what you have given to me. Psalm 145:8-9,15-18 8 The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast
love. 9 The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made. 15 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. 16 You open your hand, you satisfy the desire of every living thing. 17 The LORD is just in all his ways, and kind in all his doings. 18 The LORD is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon
him in truth. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: The Lord fills all things with blessing from above, by Cyril of Alexandria (376-444 AD) "So that by every means the Lord might be known to be God by nature, he multiplies what is little, and he looks up to heaven as though asking for the blessing from above. Now he does this out of the divine
the beginning and pattern and way." (excerpt from FRAGMENT 177) Page 19 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 14:22-3622 Then he made the dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was
there alone, 24 but the boat by this time was many furlongs distant from the land, beaten by the waves; for the wind was against them. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear. 27 But
immediately he spoke to them, saying, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear." 28 And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to Jesus; 30 but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." 31
Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" 32 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." 34 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 33 And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." 34 And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. 35 And when they got into the boat worshiped him, saying to him, say
place recognized him, they sent round to all that region and brought to him all that were sick, 36 and besought him that they might only touch the fringe of his garment; and as many as touched it were made well. Meditation: Does the Lord Jesus seem distant when trials or adversity come your way? It was at Jesus' initiative that the disciples sailed
the Lord's presence when you encounter difficulty or challenges? Fight fear with faith This dramatic incident on the sea of Galilee revealed Peter's impulsiveness. In
            Jesus always bade his disciples to see how difficult it was to follow him before they set out on the way he taught them. A great deal of failure in the moment of his failure clutched at Jesus and held him firmly. Every time Peter fell
he rose again. His failures only made him love the Lord more deeply and trust him more intently. The Lord keeps watch over us at all times, and especially in our moments of temptation and difficulty. Do you rely on the Lord for his strength and help? Jesus assures us that we have no need of fear if we trust in Him and in his great love for us. When
calamities or trials threaten to overwhelm you, how do you respond? With faith and hope in God's love, care and presence with you? Lord Jesus, help me to trust you always and to never doubt your presence and your power to help me. In my moments of doubt and weakness, may I cling to you as Peter did. Strengthen my faith that I may walk straight
in the path you set before me, neither veering to the left nor to the right. Psalm 85:8-13 8 Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak, for he will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints, to those who turn to him in their hearts. 9.Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land. 10 Steadfast love and faithfulness
will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. 11 Faithfulness will go before him, and make his footsteps a way. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Welcoming up from the sky. 12 Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. 13 Righteousness will go before him, and make his footsteps a way. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Welcoming the sky. 12 Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. 13 Righteousness will go before him, and make his footsteps a way. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Welcoming the sky. 12 Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. 13 Righteousness will sky and the sky. 12 Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. 13 Righteousness will sky and the sky. 12 Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. 13 Righteousness will sky and the sky. 14 Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. 15 Righteousness will sky and the sky and th
the Lord Jesus with expectant faith and humility, by Augustine of Hippo, 354-430 A.D. "While human praise does not tempt the Lord, people are often ruffled and nearly entranced by human praise and honors in the church. Peter was afraid on the sea, terrified by the great force of the storm. Indeed, who does not fear that voice: 'Those who say you
are happy place you in error and disturb the path of your feet' (Isaiah 3:12 Vulgate translation)? And since the soul struggles against the desire for human praise, it is good for it to turn to prayer and petition amid such danger, lest one who is charmed by praise be overcome by criticism and reproach. Let Peter, about to sink in the waves, cry out and
say, 'Lord, save me!' The Lord reached out his hand. He chided Peter, saying, 'O man of little faith, why did you not, gazing straight at the Lord as you approached, pride yourself only in him? Nevertheless he snatched Peter from the waves and did not allow him who was declaring his weakness and asking the Lord for help
to perish." (excerpt from SERMON 75:10) Page 20 Alternate reading: Luke 9:28-36GOSPEL READING: Matthew 15:21-28 21 And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to the district of Tyre and Sidon. 22 And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is severely
possessed by a demon." 23 But he did not answer her a word. And his disciples came and begged him, saying, "Send her away, for she is crying after us." 24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25 But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." 26 And he answered, "It is not fair to take the children's
 bread and throw it to the dogs." 27 She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." 28 Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed instantly. Meditation: Do you ever feel "put-off" or ignored by the Lord? This passage (Matthew 15:21)
describes the only occasion in which Jesus ministered outside of Jewish territory. (Tyre and Sidon were fifty miles north of Israel and still exist today in modern Lebanon.) A Gentile woman, a foreigner who was not a member of the Jewish people, puts Jesus on the spot by pleading for his help. At first Jesus seemed to pay no attention to her, and this
made his disciples feel embarrassed. Jesus does this to test the woman to awaken faith in her. Jesus first tests the woman's faith What did Jesus mean by the expression "throwing bread to the Gentiles did not follow God's law and were excluded from
God's covenant and favor with the people of Israel. For the Greeks the "dog" was a symbol of dishonor and was used to describe a shameless and audacious woman. There is another reference to "dogs" in Matthew's Gospel where Jesus says to his disciples, "Do not give to dogs what is holy" (Matthew 7:6). Jesus tests this woman's faith to see if she is
earnest in receiving holy things from the hand of a holy God. Jesus, no doubt, spoke with a smile rather than with an insult because this woman immediately responds with wit and faith - "even the dogs eat the crumbs". Seek the Lord Jesus with expectant faith Jesus praises a Gentile woman for her faith and for her love. She made the misery of her
child her own and she was willing to suffer rebuff in order to obtain healing for her loved one. She also had indomitable persistence. Her faith grew in contact with the person of Jesus. She began with a request and she ended on her knees in worshipful prayer to the living God. No one who ever sought Jesus with earnest faith - whether Jew or Gentile
was refused his help. Do you seek the Lord Jesus with expectant faith? Lord Jesus, your love and mercy knows no bounds. May I trust you always and pursue you with indomitable persistence as this woman did. Increase my faith in your saving power and deliver me from all evil and harm. Psalm 67:1-7 1 May God be gracious to us and bless us and
make his face to shine upon us, [Selah] 2 that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations. 3 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.
all the peoples praise you! 6 The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us. 7 God has blessed us; let all the ends of the earth fear him! Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: The Mother of the Gentiles, by Epiphanius the Latin (late 5th century) "After our Lord departed from the Jews, he came into the regions of Tyre and
Sidon. He left the Jews behind and came to the Gentiles. Those whom he had left behind remained in ruin; those to whom he came obtained salvation in their alienation. And a woman came out from the Jews, and the woman came out of that territory and cried, saying to him, 'Have pity on me, O Lord, Son of David!' O great mystery! The Lord came out from the Jews, and the woman came out from the Jews, and the woman came out of that territory and cried, saying to him, 'Have pity on me, O Lord, Son of David!' O great mystery! The Lord came out from the Jews, and the woman came out from the Jews, and the woman came out of that territory and cried, saying to him, 'Have pity on me, O Lord, Son of David!' O great mystery! The Lord came out from the Jews, and the woman came out from the Jews, and the woman came out of that territory and cried, saying to him, 'Have pity on me, O Lord, Son of David!' O great mystery! The Lord came out from the Jews, and the woman came out from the Jews, and the woman came out of the Jews, and the woman came out from the Jews, and t
from her Gentile territory. He left the Jews behind, and the woman left behind idolatry and an impious lifestyle. What they had lost, she found. The one whom they had denied in the law, she professed through faith. Thus on behalf of her daughter (the Gentile people) she
entreated the Lord. The daughter had been led astray by idolatry and sin and was severely possessed by a demon." (excerpt from INTERPRETATION OF THE GOSPEL READING: Matthew 16:13-19 13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" 14
And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon BarJona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my
Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall be loosed in heaven. Meditation: How firm is you
faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? At an opportune time Jesus tested his disciples with a crucial question: Who do men say that I am? (Matthew 16:13). Jesus was widely recognized in Israel as a mighty man of God, even being compared with the greatest of the prophets, John the Baptist, Elijah, and Jeremiah. Peter, always
quick to respond, exclaimed that Jesus was the "anointed one" (in Hebrew and Greek the word is translated as Messiah and Christ), and the only begotten Son of God sent by the Father in heaven to redeem a fallen human race. No mortal being could have
The ancient rabbis had a saying that when God saw Abraham, he exclaimed: "I have discovered a rock to found the world upon." Abraham put his trust in God and made God's word the foundation of his life and the bedrock of his faith. Through Abraham put his trust in God and made God's word the foundation of his life and the bedrock of his faith. Through Abraham put his trust in God and made God's word the foundation of his life and the bedrock of his faith.
first apostle to proclaim that Jesus was truly the Anointed One (Messiah and Christ) and the only begotten Son of God. The New Testament describes the church, the people of God, as a spiritual house and temple of the Holy Spirit with each member joined together as living stones (see 1 Peter 2:5). Faith in Jesus Christ makes us into rocks - spiritual
you to others that they may come to know you as Lord and Savior. Psalm 19:2-5 2 Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge. 3 There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard; 4 yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tent for the sun, 5
which comes forth like a bridegroom leaving his chamber, and like a strong man runs its course with joy. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Only by hope, by Basil the Great, 329-379 A.D. "'Turn, O my soul, into your rest: for the Lord has been bountiful to you' (Psalm 114:7). The brave contestant applies to himself the consoling words, very
much like to Paul, when he says: 'I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. For the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice.' These things the prophet also says to himself: Since you have fulfilled sufficiently the course of this life, turn then to your rest, 'for the Lord has been bountiful to you.' For, eternal rest
lies before those who have struggled through the present life observant of the laws, a rest not given in payment for a debt owed for their works but provided as a grace of the munificent God for those who have hoped in him." (excerpt from HOMILIES 22) Page 22 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 16:24-28 24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If any man
would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what shall a man give in return for his life? 27 For the Son of man is to come with his
angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay every man for what he has done. 28 Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Meditation: What is the most important investment you can make with your life? Jesus poses some probing questions to challenge they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."
our assumptions about what is most profitable and worthwhile. In every decision of life we are making ourselves a certain kind of person. The kind of person we are, our character, determines to a large extent the kind of person. The kind of person we are making ourselves a certain kind of person. The kind of person we are, our character, determines to a large extent the kind of person we are making ourselves a certain kind of person.
discover that they missed the most important things of all. Of what value are material things if they don't help you gain what truly lasts in eternity. Neither money nor possessions can buy heaven, mend a broken heart, or cheer a lonely person. The great exchange - my life for His Life Jesus asks the question: What will a person give in exchange for his
or her life? Everything we have is an out-right gift from God. We owe him everything, including our very lives. It's possible to give God our money, but not ourselves, or to give him lip-service, but not our hearts. A true disciple gladly gives without
measure. The joy he offers no sadness or loss can diminish. True freedom and gain The cross of Christ leads to victory and freedom from sin, despair, and death. What is the cross which Jesus Christ in order to take up each day? When my will crosses with his will, then his will must be done. Are you ready to lose all for Jesus Christ in order to take up each day? When my will crosses with his will, then his will must be done. Are you ready to lose all for Jesus Christ in order to take up each day? When my will crosses with his will, then his will must be done. Are you ready to lose all for Jesus Christ in order to take up each day? When my will crosses with his will must be done.
gain all with Jesus Christ? Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and all my will, all that I have and possess. You have given them to me; to your, O Lord, I restore them; all things are yours, dispose of them according to your will. Give me your love and your grace, for this is enough for me." (Prayer of Ignatius of Loyola,
1491-1556) Psalm 77:11-15,20 11 I will call to mind the deeds of the LORD; yes, I will remember your works, and muse on your mighty deeds. 13 Your way, O God, is holy. What god is great like our God? 14 You are the God who works wonders, who has manifested your might among the peoples. 15 You
did with your arm redeem your people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. [Selah] 20 You led thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Walk as Christ has walked, by Caesarius of Arles (470-543 AD) "When the Lord tells us in the Gospel that anyone who wants to be his follower must renounce
himself, the injunction seems harsh; we think he is imposing a burden on us. But an order is no burden when it is given by one who helps in carrying it out. To what place are we to follow Christ if not where he has already gone? We know that he has risen and ascended into heaven; there, then, we must follow him. There is no cause for despair - by
ourselves we can do nothing, but we have Christ's promise... One who claims to abide in Christ ought to walk as he was humble. Do not scorn his lowliness if you want to reach his exaltation. Human sin made the road rough. Christ's resurrection leveled it. By passing over it himself, he
transformed the narrowest of tracks into a royal highway. Two feet are needed to run along this highway; they are humility, and you will already be
climbing." (excerpt from SERMONS 159, 1.4-6) Page 23 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 17:14-20 14 And when they came to the crowd, a man came up to him and kneeling before him said, 15 "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; for often he falls into the fire, and often into the water. 16 And I brought him to your
disciples, and they could not heal him." 17 And Jesus answered, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you? Bring him here to me." 18 And Jesus rebuked him, and the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured instantly. 19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could
we not cast it out?" 20 He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you." Meditation: What kind of faith does the Lord expect of us, especially when we meet set-backs and
trials? Inevitably there are times when each of us disappoint ourselves when we suffer some kind of set-back or failure. In this Gospel incident the disciples of Jesus fail to heal an epileptic boy. Jesus' response seems stern; but it is really tempered with love and compassion. We see at once Jesus' dismay with the disciples' lack of
faith and his concern to meet the need of this troubled boy and his father. With one word of command Jesus rebukes the evil spirit to "never enter him again". Pray with expectant faith Jesus tells his disciples that they can "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if they have faith in God. The expression to "remove mountains" if the expression to "remove mountains" if
mountains" was a common Jewish phrase for removing difficulties. A wise teacher who could solve difficulties and obstacles. When you meet trials and disappointments how do you respond? With faith and trust in Jesus? Lord Jesus,
help my unbelief! Increase my faith and trust in your saving power. Give me confidence and perseverance, especially in prayer. And help me to bring your healing love and truth to those I meet Psalm 98:1-3, 8-9 1 O sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory. 2 The LORD
has made known his victory, he has revealed his vindication in the sight of the nations. 3 He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. All the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God! 8 Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing for joy together 9 before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will
judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with equity. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: Faith as a grain of mustard seed, by Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD) "The mountains here spoken of, in my opinion, are the hostile powers that have their being in a flood of great wickedness, such as are settled down, so to speak, in some
 souls of various people. But when someone has total faith, such that he no longer disbelieves in anything found in holy Scripture and has faith like that of Abraham, who so believed in God to such a degree that his faith was reckoned to him as righteousness (Genesis 15:6), then he has all faith like a grain of mustard seed. Then such a man will say to
this mountain - I mean in this case the deaf and dumb spirit in him who is said to be epileptic - 'Move from the suffering person to the abyss. The apostle, taking this as his starting point, said with apostolic authority, 'If I have all faith, so as to remove mountains' (1 Corinthians 13:2). For
he who has all faith - which is like a grain of mustard seed - moves not just one mountain but also more just like it. And nothing will be impossible for the person who has so much faith. Let us examine also this statement: 'This kind is not cast out except through prayer and fasting' (Mark 9:29). If at any time it is necessary that we should be engaged in
the healing of one suffering from such a disorder, we are not to adjure nor put questions nor speak to the impure spirit as if it heard. But [by] devoting ourselves to prayer and fasting, we may be successful as we pray for the sufferer, and by our own fasting we may thrust out the unclean spirit from him." (excerpt from COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW
13.7.19) Page 24 Alternate reading: John 12:24-26GOSPEL READING: Luke 12:32-48 32 "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions, and give alms; provide yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no
moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 35 "Let your loins be girded and your lamps burning, 36 and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the marriage feast, so that they may open to him at once when he comes and knocks. 37 Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake
when he comes; truly, I say to you, he will gird himself and have them sit at table, and he will come and serve them. 38 If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them so, blessed are those servants! 39 But know this, that if the householder had known at what hour the third, and finds them so, blessed are those servants!
into. 40 You also must be ready: for the Son of man is coming at an unexpected hour." 41 Peter said, "Lord, are you telling this parable for us or for all?" 42 And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and wise steward, whom his master will set over his household, to give them their portion of food at the proper time? 43 Blessed is that servant whom
his master when he comes will find so doing. 44 Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions. 45 But if that servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed in coming,' and begins to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, 46 the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect
him and at an hour he does not know, and will punish him, and put him with the unfaithful. 47 And that servant who knew his master's will, but did not know, and did what deserved a beating, shall receive a light beating. Every one to whom much is given, of
him will much be required; and of him to whom men commit much they will demand the more. Meditation: What is the greatest joy and treasure we could possibly possess? The Lord Jesus offers us the greatest treasure possible
but we must first seek it and make it our true joy and possession above all else. We naturally want to have and security that is worth selling all else for. The priceless exchange and everlasting reward Jesus tells his
followers to not be fearful or anxious about their present lives and future security (Luke 12:32). He urges them to sell their present needs and welfare (Luke 12:33). This seems to go against our natural instinct to hoard and save for
the future. Why would anyone want to sell their possessions and give away their money - unless they wanted to exchange these goods for something far more precious and of greater value than all the money and possessions they could ever hope to acquire in this present life. Jesus warns that money and possessions will not last and can be taken away
our own. If you make the Lord your treasure, then you will have in your possession the greatest source of joy and lasting peace and security. The wisdom of Scripture tells us, If the Almighty, and will turn your face toward God (Job 22:25-26). Do you know the joy and
happiness of making God your one and only true treasure and security? The Lord knocks at our door - will we answer him? What is the meaning of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the middle of the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home in the master who returns from a wedding feast to his home.
especially at night to keep out thieves and troublemakers. It was not possible to enter from the outside without help from someone inside. Household attendants (domestic servants) who knew their master's voice were expected to be always vigilant and prepared to unbolt the door and let him in without a moment's delay. This required an attentive
watchfulness and listening ear for any sign of the master's approach. No distraction, not even sleep, could be allowed to interfere with the preparation for the master's return. If the servants failed to hear the voice of their master's return, they literally shut him out since he could not unbolt the door from the outside - only they could open the door
 from within and allow him to enter. Their failure to welcome and serve the master on his return brought shame and dishonor. If the Lord Jesus knocked on your door today, tomorrow, at the hour of our departure from this life (our death), and when he
comes again at the end of this present world to judge all the living and the dead. The Lord will reward those who have believed in him. The Lord Jesus knocks on the door of our heart each and every day. Do you listen to his word and receive it with trust and joy. The Lord Jesus knocks on the door of our heart each one of us and he says, "Listen! I am standing and knocking at your listen to his word and receive it with trust and joy. The Lord Jesus knocks on the door of our heart each one of us and he says, "Listen! I am standing and knocking at your listen to his word and receive it with trust and joy. The Lord Jesus knocks on the door of our heart each one of us and he says, "Listen! I am standing and knocking at your listen to his word and receive it with trust and joy. The Lord Jesus knocks on the door of our heart each one of us and he says, "Listen! I am standing and knocking at your listen to his word and receive it with trust and joy. The Lord Jesus knocks on the door of our heart each one of us and he says, "Listen! I am standing and knocking at your listen to his word and receive it with trust and joy. The Lord Jesus knocks on the door of our heart each one of us and he says, "Listen! I am standing and knocking at your listen to his word and receive it with trust and joy. The Lord Jesus knocks on the door of our heart each one of us and he says, "Listen! I am standing at your listen to his word and he says at your listen to his word and he says at your listen to his word and he says at your listen to his word and he says at your listen to his word at your listen to his word and he says at your listen to his word at your listen to h
door. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and we will feast together" (Revelations 3:20). Do you hunger for the Lord and for the treasure of his kingdom? The Lord comes to reward his faithful servants Jesus' parable adds an unexpected reward for those who have faithfully served and watched for the master's return. When the
master finally arrived home from the wedding feast at a late hour of the night, he did the unthinkable for his servants who were present to be seated at his own banquet table. Once they are all seated the master then personally waits on them and serves them with his
own rich food and drink (Luke 12:37). Jesus' parable turns the world's way of thinking upside-down. The master rewards his faithful servants by serving them himself with the Lord at his banquet table? Jesus' parable has an important lesson for
each one of us. Just as Jesus was faithful and ready to obey his Father in everything - even to the Lord's will for our lives. How can we grow in faithfulness and obedience to the Lord? The Lord gives us his Holy Spirit who frees us from pride and fear, so
we can hear the Lord and embrace his way of love and faithfulness. If we fail, the Lord gesus to fill you with his Holy Spirit and with a holy desire to seek the Lord and his kingdom first above all else. Lord Jesus, you alone are my
treasure and the joy of my heart. May there be nothing in this world that holds me back from giving you my all - you are my all, my life and joy now and forever. Psalm 40:7-10, 16 6 Sacrifice and offering you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering you have not required. 7 Then I said, "Behold, I come; in the
roll of the book it is written of me; 8 I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart. 9 I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD. 10 I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD. 10 I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD. 10 I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD. 10 I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hid your saving help within my heart, I have not hel
concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation. 16 But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your faithfulness from the Early Church Fathers: The true meaning of 'loins girded and lamps burning', by Cyril of Alexandria (376-444 AD) "The
girding of our loins (Luke 12:25) signifies the readiness of the mind to work hard in every thing praiseworthy. Those who apply themselves to bodily labors and are engaged in strenuous toil have their loins girded. The lamp apparently represents the wakefulness of the mind and intellectual cheerfulness. We say that the human mind is awake when it
repels any tendency to slumber off into that carelessness that often is the means of bringing it into subjection to every kind of wickedness. When sunk in stupor, the heavenly light within the mind is liable to be endangered, or even already is in danger from a violent and impetuous blast of wind. Christ commands us to be awake. To this, his disciple
also arouses us by saying, 'Be awake. Be watchful' (1 Peter 5:8). Further on, the very wise Paul also says, 'Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead: and Christ shall give you light' (Ephesians 5:14)." (excerpt from COMMENTARY ON LUKE, HOMILY 92) Page 25 GOSPEL READING: Matthew 17:22-27 22 As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said
to them, "The Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men, 23 and they will kill him, and he will be raised on the third day." And they were greatly distressed. 24 When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the half-shekel tax went up to Peter and said, "Does not your teacher pay the tax?" 25 He said, "Yes." And when he came home, Jesus
spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their sons are free. 27 However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open
its mouth you will find a shekel; take that and give it to them for me and for yourself." Meditation: Who likes to pay taxes, especially when you think they might be unreasonable or unjust? Jesus and his disciples were confronted by tax collectors on the issue of tax evasion. When questioned about paying the temple tax, Jesus replied to his disciples: We
must pay so as not to cause bad example. In fact, we must go beyond our duty in order that we may show others what they ought to do. The scriptural expression to give no offense doesn't refer to insult or annoyance - rather it means to put no stumbling block in the way of another that would cause them to trip or fall. Jesus would not allow himself
anything which might possibly be a bad example to someone else. Do you evade unpleasant responsibilities or obligations? Jesus predicted he would endure great suffering through betrayal, rejection, and the punishment of a cruel death (Matthew
16:21, 17:22-23, and 20:17-19). The Jews resorted to stoning for very serious offenses and the Romans to crucifixion - the most painful and humiliating death they could devise for criminals they wanted to eliminate. No wonder the apostles were greatly distressed at such a prediction! If Jesus their Master were put to death, then they would likely
receive the same treatment by their enemies. Jesus called himself the "Son of Man" because this was a Jewish title for the Messiah which the prophet Daniel explained in his vision of the One whom God would send to establish his everlasting kingdom of power and righteousness over the earth (Daniel 7:13-14). The Suffering Servant and Lamb of God
Why must the Messiah be rejected and killed? Did not God promise that his Anointed One (Messiah in Hebrew) would deliver his people from their oppression and establish a kingdom of peace and justice? The prophet Isaiah had foretold that it was God's will that the "Suffering Servant" make atonement for sins through his suffering and death (Isaiah
53). John the Baptist described Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1: 29, Isaiah 53:6-7). When Jesus willing offered up his life for us on the cross he paid the price for our redemption with his blood. Jesus offers freedom and victory over sin and death Jesus came to rescue us from sin and its destructive forces and to
restore us to fulness of life with our heavenly Father. Sin not only separates us from God - it leads us down the path to corruption and unending death. Slavery to sin is to want the wrong things and to be in bondage to hurtful desires and addictions. The ransom Jesus paid sets us free from the worst tyranny possible - the tyranny of sin, Satan, and
death. Jesus' victory did not end with his sacrificial death on the cross - he triumphed over the grave when he rose again on the third day. Jesus defeated the powers of death and Satan through his cross and resurrection. The Lord Jesus offers us true freedom and peace which no one can take from us. Do you want the greatest freedom possible, the
freedom to live as God truly meant us to live as his sons and daughters? Lord Jesus, your death brought true life and freedom. May I always walk in the freedom and power of your love and truth and reject whatever is contrary to your will for my life. Psalm 148:1-2,11-12,14 1 Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens, praise him in the
heights! 2 Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his host! 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples, praise for all his saints, for the people of Israel who are near to him. Praise the LORD! Daily Quote from the Early
Church Fathers: Jesus speaks of his death and resurrection, by Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD) "I think we have an obligation to examine this, too: that Jesus was delivered into the hands of men, not by men into the hands of men but by powers to whom the Father delivered into the hands of men into the hands of men but by powers to whom the Father delivered into the hands of men into the hands of men but by powers to whom the Father delivered into the hands of men into the hands
under the power of those to whom he was delivered, he "destroyed him who had the power of death," For "through death he destroyed him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and delivered all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage." (excerpt from COMMENTARY ON MATTHEW 13.8) Page 26 GOSPEL READING:
Matthew 18:1-5, 10, 12-14 1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever humbles himself like this child, he put him in the midst of them, 3 and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whoever humbles himself like this child, he
is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; 10 "See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he
not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? 13 And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray. 14 So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. Meditation: Are you surprised to see the disciples
discussing with Jesus who is the greatest? Don't we do the same thing? The appetite for glory and greatness seems to be inbred in us. Who doesn't cherish the ambition to be "somebody" whom others admire rather than a "nobody"? Even the Psalms speak about the glory God has destined for us. You have made them a little lower than God, and
crowned them with glory and honor (Psalm 8:5). Whose glory do you seek? Jesus made a dramatic gesture by placing a child next to himself to show his disciples who really is the greatest in the kingdom of God. What can a little child possibly teach us about greatness? Children in the ancient world had no rights, position, or privileges of their own.
They were socially at the "bottom of the rung" and at the service of their parents, much like the household staff and domestic servants. What is the significance of Jesus' gesture? Jesus elevated a little child in the presence of his disciples by placing the child in a privileged position of honor at his right side. It is customary, even today, to seat the guest
of honor at the right side of the host. The lowly of heart empty themselves of pride Who is the greatest in God's kingdom? The one who is humble and lowly of heart empty themselves of pride Who is the greatest in God's kingdom? The one who is humble and lowly of heart empty themselves of pride and self-seeking glory by taking the lowly position of a servant and child before God. The simple of heart know
that they belong to God - he is their father, teacher, and provider - the one who shows them the way of peace, joy, and life everlasting. They are content to recognize their total dependence on God who is the source of all goodness and every good gift. Jesus restores us to the people he has made holy What does Jesus' story about a lost sheep tell us
about God and his kingdom? Shepherds normally counted their sheep at the end of the day to make sure all were accounted for. Since sheep by their very nature are very social, an isolated sheep can quickly become bewildered and even neurotic. The shepherd's grief and anxiety is turned to joy when he finds the lost sheep and restores it to the fold.
What was new in Jesus' teaching was the insistence that sinners must be sought out and not merely mourned for. God does not rejoice in the loss of anyone, but desires that all be saved and restored to fellowship with him. That is why the whole community of heaven rejoices when one sinner is found and restored to fellowship with God (Luke 15:7).
Seekers of the lost are much needed today. Do you pray and seek after those you know who have lost their way to God? Lord Jesus, teach me your by humility and simplicity of heart that I may find perfect joy in you. Psalm
119:14,24,72,103,111,131 14. In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches. 24. Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counselors. 72. The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces. 103. How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!. 111. Your testimonies are my
heritage forever; yes, they are the joy of my heart. 131. With open mouth I pant, because I long for your commandments. Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: What it means to become a child a God, by Epiphanius the Latin (late 5th century) "Here the Lord not only repressed the apostles' thoughts but also checked the ambition of believers
throughout the whole world, so that he might be great who wanted to be least. For with this purpose Jesus used the example of the child, that what he had been through his nature, we through our holy living might become - innocent, like children innocent of every sin. For a child does not know how to hold resentment or to grow angry. He does not
know how to repay evil for evil. He does not think base thoughts, He does not know how to disparage, how to blaspheme, how to hurt, how to lie. He believes what he hears. What he is ordered he does not analyze. He
loves his parents with full affection. Therefore what children are in their simplicity, let us become a child innocent of sin in this way is greater in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives such a person will receive Christ." (excerpt from
INTERPRETATION OF THE GOSPELS 27) Welcome to the daily readings from Bible In A Year Online daily readings consist of passages from the Old Testament, New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs. This arrangement of Scripture brings variety
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2025 Genesis 41:3757 Introduction Genesis 41:3757: The king puts Joseph in charge, and Joseph is made governor over Egypt, overseeing the collection and storage of grain before the famine occurs. The king gives Joseph marries, and he and his
wife have two sons. When the READ MORE You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. John 8:32 CEV Latest Daily Bible Readings July 18, 2025 Genesis 41:3757 Introduction Genesis 41:3757: The king puts Joseph in charge, and Joseph is made governor over Egypt, overseeing the collection and storage of grain before the famine occurs.
The king gives Joseph symbols of royal authority and gives him an Egyptian name that may mean, God speaks, he lives. Joseph marries, and his wife have two sons. When the READ MORE July 17, 2025 Genesis 41:136: The king of Egypt has disturbing dreams, and his magicians and wise men are unable to interpret
them. The wine steward tells the king abut Joseph ability to interpret dreams, and the king sends for Joseph informs the king of the meaning of the meaning of the dreamsthat the country will have seven years of abundant grain followed by READ MORE July 16, 2025 Genesis 40:123 Introduction Genesis 40:123: Two of the kings officials the wine steward and
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the chief bakerare imprisoned where Joseph is being kept. Each has a dream that Joseph interprets. Todays Key Verse: Genesis 40:8b It is God who gives the ability to interpret dreams, Joseph said. Tell me your dreams. Read 40Some time later the king of Egypt's wine steward and his READ MORE July 15, 2025 Genesis 39:123 Introduction Genesis

39:123: When Joseph is brought to Egypt, he is sold to Potiphar, one of the kings officers, and he becomes Potiphars wife attempts to seduce him, and when Joseph refuses her advances, she brings false charges against him for which he is imprisoned. Todays Key Verse: Genesis 39:23b The LORD was with Joseph and made READ MORE July 14, 2025 Genesis 37:1236 Introduction Genesis 37:1236: Josephs brothers plot to kill him, but Judah convinces them to sell Joseph to a caravan of traders who were on their way to Egypt. Todays Key Verse: Genesis 37:1236 In Egypt, the Midianites had sold Joseph to Potiphar, one of the kings officers, who was the captain of the palace guard. Read 12One day when Joseph's READ MORE July 13, 2025 Genesis 37:111 Introduction Genesis 37:111 Introductio brothers his dreams, they become jealous of him. Todays Key Verse: Genesis 37:3a READ MORE Donate Today Give us this day our daily bread. Matthew 6:11 KJV Although Moses and Aaron performed various wondersin Pharaoh's presence, the LORD made Pharaoh obstinate, and he would not let the children of Israel leave his land. The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month shall stand at the head of your calendar; you shall reckon it the first month of the year. Tell the whole community of Israel: On the tenth of this month every one of your families must procure for itself a lamb, one apiece for each household. If a family is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join the nearest household in procuring one and shall share in the lambin proportion to the number of persons who partake of it. The lamb must be a year-old male and without blemish. You may take it from either the sheep or the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, and then, with the whole assembly of Israel present, it shall be slaughtered during the evening twilight. They shall take some of its bloodand apply it to the two doorposts and the lintelof every house in which they partake of the lamb. That same night they shall eat its roasted whole, with its head and shanks and inner organs. None of it must be kept beyond the next morning; whatever is left over in the morning shall be burned up. "This is how you are to eat it:with your loins girt, sandals on your feet and your staff in hand, you shall eat like those who are in flight. It is the Passover of the LORD. For on this same night I will go through Egypt, striking down every first born of the land, both man and beast, and executing judgment on all the gods of EgyptI, the LORD! But the blood will mark the houses where you are. Seeing the blood, I will pass over you; thus, when I strike the land of Egypt, no destructive blow will come upon you. "This day shall be a memorial feast for you, which all your generations shall celebrate with pilgrimage to the LORD, as a perpetual institution. "Page 2 The Pharisees went out and took counsel against Jesus realized this, he withdrew from that place. Many people followed him, and he cured them all, but he warned them not to make him known. This was to fulfill what had been spoken through Isaiah the prophet: Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom I delight; I shall place my Spirit upon him, and he will not contend or cry out, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not delight; I shall place my Spirit upon him, and he will not contend or cry out, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not contend or cry out, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. hope. Page 3 The LORD appeared to Abraham saw three men standing nearby. When he saw three men s past your servant.Let some water be brought, that you may bathe your feet, and then rest yourselves; and afterward you may go on your way. "The men replied, "Very well, do as you have said." Abraham hastened into the tent and told Sarah, "Quick, three measures of fine flour! Knead it and make rolls." He ran to the herd, picked out a tender, choice steer, and gave it to a servant, who quickly prepared it. Then Abraham got some curds and milk, as well as the steer that had been prepared, and set these before the three men; and he waited on them under the tree while they ate. They asked Abraham, "Where is your wife Sarah?"He replied, "There in the tent."One of them said, "I will surely return to you about this time next year, and Sarah will then have a son. "Page 4 When it was reported to the king of Egyptthat the people had fled, Pharaoh and his servants changed their minds about them. They exclaimed, "What have we done!Why, we have released Israel from our service!"So Pharaoh made his chariots ready and mustered his soldierssix hundred first-class chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt, with warriors on them all. So obstinate had the LORD made Pharaohthat he pursued the children of Israeleven while they were marching away in triumph. The Egyptians, then, pursued them; Pharaoh's whole army, his horses, chariots and charioteers, caught up with them as they lay encamped by the sea, at Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon. Pharaoh was already near when the children of Israel looked upand saw that the Egyptians were on the march in pursuit of them. In great fright they cried out to the LORD.And they complained to Moses, "Were there no burial places in Egypt?Did we not tell you this in Egypt; when we said, Leave us alone. Let us serve the Egyptians'?Far better for us to be the slaves of the Egyptiansthan to die in the desert. "But Moses answered the people, "Fear not! Stand you will see the victory the LORD will win for you will see the victory the LORD will fight for you; you have only to keep still." Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. And you, lift up your staff and, with hand outstretched over the sea, split the sea in two, that the children of Israel may pass through it on dry land. But I will make the Egyptians so obstinate that they will go in after them. Then I will receive glory through Pharaoh and all his army, his chariots and charioteers. The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I receive glory through Pharaohand his chariots and charioteers. "Page 5 On the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peterand to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and told them, "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him." Mary stayed outside the tomb weeping. And as she wept, she bent over into the tomband saw two angels in white sitting there, one at the head and one at the feetwhere the Body of Jesus had been. And they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken my Lord, and I don't know where they laid him. "When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him." Jesus there, but did not know it was Jesus. Jesus said to him, "Sir, if you carried him away, tell me where you laid him, and I will take him." Jesus said to her, "Mary!"She turned and said to him in Hebrew, "Rabbouni," which means Teacher. Jesus said to her, "Stop holding on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and tell them, 'I am going to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God. "Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples," I have seen the Lord, "and then reported what he told her. Page 6 Then the LORD said to Moses, I will now rain down bread from heaven for you. Each day the people are to go out and gather their daily portion; thus will I test them, to see whether they follow my instructions or not. On the sixth day, however, when they prepare what they bring in, let it be twice as much as they gather on the other days. Then Moses said to Aaron, Tell the whole congregation of the children of Israel: Present yourselves before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling. When Aaron announced this to the whole assembly of the children of Israel, they turned toward the desert, and lo, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud! The LORD spoke to Moses and said, I have heard the grumbling of the children of Israel. Tell them: In the evening quail came up and covered the camp. In the morning a dew lay all about the camp, and when the dew evaporated, there on the surface of the desertwere fine flakes like hoarfrost on the ground. On seeing it, the children of Israel asked one another, What is this? for they did not know what it was. But Moses told them, This is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.

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