

Devotion for the 5th Saturday in Lent

Psalm 78:1-7

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth!

I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us.

We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and His might, and the wonders He has done.

He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded to our fathers to teach to their children.

That the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children.

So that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments.

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

Old Testament Reading: Exodus 7:1-25 *The First Plague: water into blood*
New Testament Reading: Mark 16:1-20 *Resurrection and Great Commission*

Writing: Martin Luther *The greatest treasure*

Wherefore it ought to be the first concern of every Christian to lay aside all confidence in works and increasingly to strengthen faith alone and through faith to grow in the knowledge, not of works, but of Christ Jesus, who suffered and rose for him, as Peter teaches in the last chapter of his first Epistle (1 Peter 5:10). No other work makes a Christian.

Thus when the Jews asked Christ, as related in John 6, what they must do “to be doing the work of God,” he brushed aside the multitude of works which he saw they did in great profusion and suggested one work, saying, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him who he has sent (John 6:29); for on him has God the Father set his seal” (John 6:27).

Therefore true faith in Christ is a treasure beyond comparison which brings with it complete salvation and saves man from every evil, as Christ says in the last chapter of Mark (16:16): “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”.....So Paul says, Romans 10, “For man believes with his heart and so is justified.”

Hymn: My Faith Looks Up to Thee (Public Domain)

My faith looks up to Thee, Thou Lamb of Calvary, Saviour Divine!

Now hear me while I pray, Take all my guilt away, Oh, let me from this day be wholly thine!

May thy rich grace impart, strength to my fainting heart, My zeal inspire; As Thou has died for me, Oh, may my love to thee, Pure, warm and changeless be, A living fire.

While life's dark maze I tread, and griefs around me spread, Be Thou my guide; Bid darkness turn to day, Wipe sorrow's tears away, Nor let me ever stray, from Thee aside.

When ends life's transient dream, When death's cold sullen stream, shall over me roll; Blest Saviour, then in love, fear and distrust remove; oh, bear me safe above, A ransomed soul!

Prayer

“Almighty God, through the resurrection of Your Son You have secured peace for our troubled consciences. Grant us this peace evermore that trusting in the merit of Your Son, we may come at last to the perfect peace of heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

The Lord's Prayer

The Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen

Catechism for Lent: Confession and Absolution

It is well known that we have made clear and praised the benefit of Absolution and the Power of the Keys. Many troubled consciences have derived comfort from our teaching. They have been comforted after they heard that it is God's command, no, rather, the very voice of the Gospel, that we should believe the Absolution and regard it as certain that the forgiveness of sins is freely granted to us for Christ's sake. We should believe that through this faith we are truly reconciled to God. Apology of the Augsburg Confession XI 59