

*For the week of Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost  
October 1<sup>st</sup> through October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023*

### **Notes for the Week — By What Authority, Matthew 21:23–27**

I recently engaged someone who accused me of earning a living by taking you all for fools. He argued that Christianity is unreasonable and every critically thinking person could see that. I invited him to demonstrate his critical thinking prowess by making me a fool right there on the spot. He began by asserting the extreme improbability of many events in the Bible. I redirected him, telling him that if you believe in an almighty God who intervenes in creation for the sake of His people, then although the events are highly improbable of themselves (which itself doesn't disprove they happened), it is actually extremely unreasonable to disbelieve that an Almighty God did as He said He did. Therefore, his argument should be about how believing in God is unreasonable. Eventually he took my advice, and asserted that either God is Almighty or good, but He cannot be both. I asked him to demonstrate how his assertion is true, and he started telling me about how a good, almighty God couldn't allow evil to exist. I responded by asking him where he got his notion of "good" and "evil."

The elders and chief priests wanted to know by whose authority Jesus taught. Jesus asked them, "Where did the baptism of John come from?" The chief priests and elders knew they were trapped. They either had to acknowledge that John was not a prophet, or justify why they didn't listen to his word about Jesus. They didn't want to do either, so they despised Jesus for it. People don't want to acknowledge God, but they want to use His own words to accuse Him, just like the person did who told me that God cannot be good while allowing evil to exist. Which is it, is God the authority or not? If He is the authority, then why don't you believe Him? If He is not the authority, then you have no standard to accuse Him by. Yet, people don't like when we defend the truth and point to God's authority. It leads to mocking and plotting and even death.

But here's the good news. Rage as they will, even the devil, for they do not have the authority. Only God does. And the Father is the one who sent Christ for us to believe in, to die and rise again. And on account of Christ, there is nothing our opponents can do to us. They have no authority. So even if they should kill us, God will only raise us again. Let them rage, for the gates of hell cannot overcome Jesus Christ our Lord. And He will come again in His authority, and every knee will bow and every tongue will confess and we will be vindicated as we are raised to eternal life. Amen.

### ***The Order of Meditation and Prayer***

*Pray and confess out loud as much from the order of meditation and prayer as you are able, or as your family size and ages dictate.  
Learn by heart the verse, catechism, and hymn of the week.*

#### **INVOCATION**

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

#### **APOSTLES' CREED**

#### **VERSE: MATTHEW 28:18B**

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

**PSALM 25:1-10 and/or the appointed daily psalms.**

**Prayer on the Psalm**

*O Lord, our most merciful Father in heaven, be gracious to us and forgive us our sins. Rule in our hearts by Your Spirit, that we may hate and forsake all manner of evil. Restrain our enemies who would deprive us of our salvation, and be to us, and Your whole Church on earth, a very present help in time of need. Amen.*

| Daily Psalms | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------------|--------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Morning      | 42, 43 | 45     | 48      | 50        | 52, 53   | 54, 56 | 59       | 62, 63 |
| Evening      | 44     | 46, 47 | 49      | 51        | 55       | 57, 58 | 60, 61   | 64, 65 |

**BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

|           | Bible Narrative for the Week   | Second Reading |
|-----------|--|----------------|
| Sunday    | Matt. 21:23–27   |                |
| Monday    | The Sin of Peor—Numbers 25:1–18  |                |
| Tuesday   | Moses Warns the People Against Rebelling—Deuteronomy 5:32—6:25           |                |
| Wednesday | The Lord Will Raise Up a Prophet Like Moses—Deuteronomy 18:9–22          |                |
| Thursday  | Moses Dies on Mount Nebo—Deuteronomy 32:48–52; 34:1–12                   |                |
| Friday    | Joshua Takes Moses’ Place and Prepares to Cross the Jordan—Joshua 1:1–18 |                |
| Saturday  | Isaiah 5:1–7   | Phil. 3:4b-14  |

**The Catechism: The Creed— The First Article**

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| <b><i>I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.</i></b>  | Pre +         |
| <i>What does this mean?</i>  | First Grade+  |
| 1. I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. |               |
| 2. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have.  |               |
| 3. He richly and daily provides me with all I need to support this body and life.  | Second Grade+ |
| 4. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil   |               |
| 5. All this he does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me.  |               |
| 6. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.  |               |

**DEVOTION OR MEDITATION**

**DAILY PRAYER**

Select from among the following prayers as time and circumstances allow:

**Collect of the Week**

Almighty God, You exalted Your Son to the place of all honor and authority. Enlighten our minds by Your Holy Spirit that, confessing Jesus as Lord, we may be led into all truth; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **Daily Themes for Prayer**

- Sunday:** *For the joy of the resurrection among us; for the fruit of faith nourished by the Word and Sacrament.*
- Monday:** *For faith to live in the promises of Holy Baptism; for one's calling and daily work; for the unemployed; for the salvation and well-being of our neighbors; for schools, colleges, and seminaries; for good government and for peace.*
- Tuesday:** *For deliverance against temptation and evil; for the addicted and despairing, the tortured and oppressed; for those struggling with sin.*
- Wednesday:** *For marriage and family, that husbands and wives, parents and children live in ordered harmony according to the Word of God; for parents who must raise children alone; for our communities and neighborhoods.*
- Thursday:** *For the Church and her pastors; for teachers, deaconesses, and other church workers; for missionaries and for all who serve the Church; for fruitful and salutary use of the blessed Sacrament of Christ's body and blood.*
- Friday:** *For the preaching of the holy cross of our Lord Jesus Christ and for the spread of His knowledge throughout the whole world; for the persecuted and oppressed; for the sick and dying.*
- Saturday:** *For faithfulness to the end; for the renewal of those who are withering in the faith or have fallen away; for receptive hearts and minds to God's Word on the Lord's Day; for pastors and people as they prepare to administer and receive Christ's holy gifts.*

### **In Our Prayers this Week**

**Our Congregation:** *Dennis Kelley, Bo, Ava; Justine Kennington; Wesley Kennington; Casey King, Noah, Gideon; Doris King*

**Baptismal Birthdays:** *Tristan Davis; Amanda Ferguson*

**Wedding Anniversaries:** *Eric & Michele Sherpy; Wayde & Lisa Shea*

**Members of the Congregation:** *Family of Ellen Cromwell*

**Friends of our Congregation:** *Mary Thurman; Marcella Daugharthy; Cathy Naden; Arlene Jenks; Denise Collins*

**Other:**

**Our Circuit:**

*St. John Lutheran Church, Aliceville; Rev. Timothy Booth*

*Trinity Lutheran Church, Burlington; Vacant*

**Our District Staff and President,** *Rev. Justin Panzer.*

*Jackie Schaefer, Communications Specialist*

*Heather Williams, Business Manager*

**Our Synod and President,** *Rev. Matthew Harrison*

**Our Community:** *USD 290; Life Care Center; Hope House*

**Our State and Governor,** *Laura Kelly*

**Our Nation and President,** *Joseph Biden*

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

#### **MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER FROM THE CATECHISM**

*I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.*

—or—

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

**HYMN OF THE WEEK**

**“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”**

**655**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 Lord, keep us steadfast in Your Word;<br>Curb those who by deceit or sword<br>Would wrest the kingdom from Your Son<br>And bring to naught all He has done. | 2 Lord Jesus Christ, Your pow’r make known,<br>For You are Lord of lords alone;<br>Defend Your holy Church that we<br>May sing Your praise eternally. |
| 3 O Comforter of priceless worth,<br>Send peace and unity on earth;<br>Support us in our final strife<br>And lead us out of death to life.                    |   |

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.  
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***Looking Forward to “The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost”***

***October 8, 2023***

***Readings: Isaiah 5:1-7 | Philippians 3:4b-14 | Matthew 21:33-46***

“The vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel” (Is. 5:7), which He planted “on a very fertile hill” (Is. 5:1). He did everything for His vineyard, not only clearing it of stones and planting it with “choice vines,” but also building the “watchtower” of His prophets and hewing out the “wine vat” of His priesthood in its midst (Is. 5:2). But when “he looked for it to yield grapes,” there were only “wild grapes” of bloodshed and unrighteousness (Is. 5:2, 7). The Lord Jesus likewise described the unfaithfulness of those who were called to care for His vineyard (Matt. 21:33–35). But in this He also describes His cross and Passion (Matt. 21:38–39), by which He has redeemed the vineyard for Himself. He is the true Vine, planted by death into the ground, and in His resurrection He brings forth “the fruits in their seasons” (Matt. 21:41). Among those good grapes of the true Vine is the apostle Paul. Once a zealous persecutor of the Church, he “suffered the loss of all things” in order to “gain Christ and be found in him,” to “know him and the power of his resurrection” (Phil. 3:8–10)

