

# Everyday **FAITH** Family Page

Delivered

## Law/Gospel

Because of my sin, I am helpless and needy and can do nothing to save myself. **Jesus works through the Means of Grace to invite me to come to Him, blessing me with His gifts of forgiveness and eternal life.**

## Bible Words

[Jesus says,] "Let the little children come to Me." Matthew 19:14

## Prayer

Dear Jesus, we thank You for welcoming all people to come to You. Thank You for loving us so much You died on the cross and rose again to save us from our sins. Thank You for Your blessings of forgiveness of sins, new life, faith in You, and a place in Your kingdom. In Your name we pray. Amen.

## Jesus Welcomes the Children

Matthew 19:13–15; Luke 18:15–17

Following His Baptism in the Jordan River, Jesus began His earthly ministry, teaching about the kingdom of heaven, healing, and working other miracles. It's no wonder Jesus drew large crowds of people wherever He went. He presented the love of God and salvation as a free gift of God's grace, rather than as a consequence of our best efforts to keep the Law. He taught about loving, forgiving, and showing mercy to one's neighbor. He spent time with those the rest of society often rejected.

Jesus took time from His demanding schedule to welcome and embrace children. Likely with the best intentions, the disciples rebuked the children. Perhaps they believed Jesus was far too important to trifle with little ones. Maybe they believed children were too limited to grasp His divine teachings. Regardless, our Lord makes clear that the little children are welcome. What's more, He uses a child's humility and natural trust to explain key elements of the Christian life.

God's desire to bring salvation to the little children extends to people of all ages, even today. For this reason, God has given us His Means of Grace: the Word and Sacraments. The Bible teaches that through the Means of Grace, God draws lost and condemned sinners out of sin, death, and hell and brings them forgiveness and everlasting life in heaven. His Word and Sacraments are His divine and effectual means to bring what Christ earned on the cross to all, even the little children!



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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## Law/Gospel

Baptism without the name of the triune God is not a true Baptism.

**Through Baptism, God puts His name on me and makes me part of His family.**

## Bible Words

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Matthew 28:19

## Prayer

Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to rescue us from sin and death. Thank You for making us Your children in Holy Baptism through the water and Your Word. Help us share Your Word with others as we follow Jesus' command to "go and make disciples of all nations." In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Jesus Gives the Great Commission

Matthew 28:16–20

The eleven remaining disciples must have experienced a chaotic swirl of emotions during the last few weeks of Jesus' earthly ministry. Our Lord was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane. Judas, one of their own, betrayed Jesus to His enemies. Jesus was imprisoned, falsely accused, condemned, flogged nearly to death, and murdered on a Roman cross. Then finally, He rose from the dead.

Now, Jesus meets His beloved students on a mountain in Galilee and ascends into heaven. Before doing so, He charges them with the most important work of teaching the faith and baptizing. Specifically, they are to teach people to obey all that Jesus taught them and to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

In Baptism, God places His everlasting mark on His children. Although the family and congregation may hear nothing more than a few falling drops of water and the words "I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," in heaven, the angels rejoice and our Lord proclaims that this sinner has now become His child!

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## Law/Gospel

My sins crucified Jesus. **Through His Word and Baptism, God washes away my sins and gives me eternal life.**

## Bible Words

Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved. Mark 16:16

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the blessings that You give us in Baptism: forgiveness of sins, rescue from eternal death and the devil, and eternal salvation. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may we be bold to tell others of the life and salvation found only in You. In Your name we pray. Amen.

## Peter Preaches on Pentecost

Acts 2:22–24, 36–41

On Pentecost, fifty days after the Sabbath of Passover, the Twelve—most likely with other believers, 120 in all—are gathered together in one place (Acts 1:15; 2:17). Divided tongues of fire come to them and alight on each of those gathered. The Holy Spirit enables them to speak in various languages, but not just any languages. Our Lord empowers them to speak in the native tongues of those nations nearby whose citizens are in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, connecting directly into Jesus' mandate to teach and baptize.

Peter, who had previously denied Jesus three times, now boldly takes advantage of this dramatic event to preach Law and Gospel to those present. Peter quotes the prophet Joel and King David in an effort to add force to his convicting message: they all are responsible for crucifying Jesus, even if they were not present at the very event.

Peter follows with a call to repentance and sweet Gospel, directing his hearers to Baptism and the gifts that it brings: faith, forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the Holy Spirit.



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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## Law/Gospel

Because of sin, there is nothing I, or anyone, can do to earn salvation or come to God. **God gives me and all people, young and old, the gift of Baptism, through which He forgives sins and makes us His children.**

## Bible Words

By grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8

## Prayer

Dear God, thank You for the gift of saving faith through Jesus that You have given us by Your grace in Holy Baptism. By the power of the Holy Spirit, make us bold proclaimers of the Gospel in every place we go. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Paul Baptizes the Philippian Jailer

Acts 16:25–34

Once a figure of immense authority within the Jewish establishment, Paul now suffered ridicule, rejection, harassment, beatings, and—as we read in today's passage—imprisonment. God worked great faith in Paul's heart. As a result, Paul was able to withstand harsh treatment for the sake of the Christ, even singing hymns of praise to God while in prison.

Disturbed by the earthquake, the Roman guard rushed to the cells and found them standing open. Assuming the prisoners escaped, and anticipating execution for what he believed to be his failure, the jailer resigned himself to suicide. Paul intervened, telling the jailer he mustn't harm himself. As with Paul, God had other plans.

"What must I do to be saved?" the jailer asked Paul. In addition to the earthquake, the jailer recognized something special in Paul and Silas, but he was not able to trust in Christ without the Holy Spirit. God's Holy Spirit works through the Word to create faith. He uses Paul's words in this instance to do exactly that.

The jailer and his entire household were baptized. Baptism saves because Jesus Christ died on the cross and rose again. Through the Word, this Gospel message is tied to the water, and together, this divine washing makes a lost, condemned sinner one of God's children forever.

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## Law/Gospel

I sinfully deny Baptism's ability to change hearts and lives.

**Through Baptism, I receive complete forgiveness and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.**

## Bible Words

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. 2 Corinthians 5:17

## Prayer

Lord God, through the death and resurrection of Your Son, Jesus, You saved us from the eternal death we deserve because of our sins. In Holy Baptism, You washed away our sins, gave us faith in You, and made us Your children. By the power of the Holy Spirit, continue to make our faith in You stronger and stronger. Amen.

## Ananias Baptizes Saul

Acts 9:10–22

Far from leaving Saul (later known as Paul) on the side of the road following his dramatic encounter, Jesus delivers the apostle to the house of Judas on Straight Street. Nevertheless, Saul is far from ready to embrace God's calling. He is shaken, weakened, and blinded. God encourages Saul with a vision that a man named Ananias will visit him and serve as the Lord's instrument to restore the apostle's sight.

Trusting in the work of the Holy Spirit in Saul's life, Ananias obeys the Lord's charge. Ananias goes to the house on Straight Street and finds things just as the Lord said he would. We give thanks to the Lord that Ananias reacted as he did, for certainly he could have indulged his doubts and rejected the Lord's charge, obeying fear and self-preservation over the Lord's work. Through Ananias, the Lord restored Saul, His chosen instrument to spread the Gospel to the Gentiles and Israelites.

Baptism prepares us for heaven. In the waters of Baptism, we have been buried and raised with Christ and have God's forgiveness for His sake. We are as righteous as we need to be. What's more, through Baptism, the Holy Spirit empowers us to resist the temptation of sin and instead to embrace a God-pleasing life.



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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## Law/Gospel

I sinfully see no need for repentance. **When I confess my sins, I acknowledge that I have offended God by failing to fear, love, and trust in Him and am ready to hear that my sins have been removed through Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection.**

## Bible Words

If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. 1 John 1:9

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, daily we sin against You and against others. By the power of the Holy Spirit, help us to recognize our sins, then confess them to You and repent of them. Assure us that You forgive all our sins for Jesus' sake. Give us the power and strength to resist temptation and to follow You alone. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## John Tells People to Repent

Matthew 3:1–12

By the time of the Roman occupation, the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, and teachers of the law enjoyed great power, exercising influence in Jewish society and pressing the people with strict, unscriptural laws they themselves didn't and couldn't keep. Consequently, the ranks of Jewish religious leadership were rife with corruption, abuse, and self-righteousness.

John the Baptist, the son of the aged Zechariah and Elizabeth, served as the last prophet to herald Jesus' coming. As an Essene, he lived a rugged life of separation and dedication to the Lord, residing in the wilderness, living off the land, and vesting himself in animal skins. John's message was simple: Repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. The alternative is God's eternal wrath.

This harsh edict was anything but sweet music to the ears of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who considered themselves righteous before God as the result of keeping God's Law and having Abraham as their ancestor. John's warning and the ministry of Christ, which followed, ran directly counter to the culture of sinful pride and self-righteousness that marked the place and time.

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# Everyday **FAITH** Family Page

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## Law/Gospel

I sin when I ignore Christ's forgiveness and continue in my sin.

**Christ forgives me completely and strengthens me through the Holy Spirit to leave my life of sin.**

## Bible Words

[Jesus says,] "Your sins are forgiven." Mark 2:5

## Prayer

Dear Lord Jesus, help me to recognize the sins I do, say, and think. Lead me to confess them to You and to tell You that I am sorry for them. In Your mercy and grace, forgive my sins and help me to live the way You want me to. Amen.

## Jesus Forgives a Woman

John 8:1–11

Seething with such jealousy and bitterness, the Pharisees and scribes were vigilant to find an opportunity to bring an accusation against Jesus and have Him arrested, shunned, or at least discredited.

One such opportunity was when a woman was caught in adultery, as we read in today's passage. The religious leaders drew on passages from the Old Testament as support for stoning her. Interestingly, these verses also call for stoning the man involved in the sin.

Their plan was to place Jesus in an untenable position. If He agreed to stone the woman, He would lose credibility with the people. If He ignored the Scriptures of the Old Testament, He would lose credibility as a rabbi.

Jesus' response was perfect. Avoiding their trap, He said, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her" (John 8:7). With this simple statement, our Lord diffused the tension and turned the attention from Himself to the Pharisees and scribes. If they had chosen to proceed with stoning the woman, they would have run the risk of conflict with the Romans, who did not allow unsanctioned death sentences. What's more, casting the stone would have been a public proclamation of innocence before God.

It's important to notice that Jesus did not ignore the reality of the woman's sin nor her need to repent and discontinue. His words emphasized His complete forgiveness and the imperative to sin no further.



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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## Law/Gospel

I sin when I doubt the forgiveness given through the Church.

**Christ Himself gives complete forgiveness in the words of Absolution spoken by my pastor.**

## Bible Words

[Jesus says,] "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven."  
Matthew 16:19

## Prayer

Dear Jesus, You are our risen Savior and Lord! Because of Your sacrifice on the cross and Your triumphant resurrection from the dead, we have the gift of God's forgiveness for our sins. May we never doubt the forgiveness we receive because it is based on You, who paid for our sins with Your own blood on the cross. In Your name we pray. Amen.

## Jesus Appears to the Disciples

John 20:19–23

The disciples had good reason to remain behind locked doors in fear. Jesus Christ, their mentor and friend for three years, was dead, put to death by the Jewish authorities and the Roman Empire. Jesus' ministry included miracles, amazing demonstrations of His divine power. If such a teacher could not resist the power of the Jewish leaders and Rome, what possible chance did the disciples have?

In addition to fear, the disciples no doubt experienced profound despair at the death of their beloved Jesus. As circumstances had appeared, Jesus had not turned out to be what they had expected. Even up until Christ's ascension into heaven, many of the disciples still expected Jesus to claim His rightful throne as the earthly king of Israel and usher in a new era of peace and prosperity for the Jews. This possibility died with Jesus on the cross. For those who had more clearly understood Jesus' true mission, that, as He had repeatedly stated, He came into the world to die for the sins of many and rise again after three days, where was Jesus? Shouldn't He be alive? Was it all just a hoax?

Yet now, Jesus appears and stands among them. We are fixed on His first words, "Peace be with you." Jesus' peace is not made up of empty, meaningless well-wishes or good intentions. Jesus brings peace because He accomplished peace. He bids the disciples to embrace what He earned for them on the cross. Sin was removed and with it, enmity with God. Now, the task at hand is to equip and empower the disciples, His servants, to take that peace, that forgiveness, into all the world.

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## Law/Gospel

I sinfully seek revenge rather than repentance. **God promises forgiveness through His Word and empowers me to show love for and forgive those in my church family.**

## Bible Words

There is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents. Luke 15:10

## Prayer

Dear Jesus, our own sins and the sins of others hurt and divide us. Help us, Lord, to recognize our own sins and to ask for Your forgiveness. When others sin against us, help us to model Your love and patience as the Holy Spirit helps us to point out their sin. Give us the patience and willing hearts to love and forgive them as You have forgiven us. In Your name we pray. Amen.

## Jesus Teaches about Forgiveness

Matthew 18:15–20

Jesus' disciples approach Him and ask who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus points to children, with their pure faith and humility. Our Lord then warns against leading others into sinful behavior. He follows this with a parable emphasizing God's desire that none of His children should perish. In this context, Jesus presents today's passage. When a brother or sister sins, we address that sin privately, gently, and humbly. We involve others and impose discipline only as needed. Adding the final layer, Jesus teaches the parable of the unforgiving servant. In doing so, our Lord stresses the importance of recognizing one's own sin and the need to forgive others, always mindful of the great debt our Lord forgave us in Christ.

With the humility of a child and mindful of what God has done for us, we avoid leading others into sin and instead address the unrepentant brother or sister with a gentle spirit, always aiming to lead him or her to restoration.



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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## Law/Gospel

I betray my Lord when I sin.

**Jesus is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. With His very body and blood, He grants me forgiveness, life, and salvation.**

## Bible Words

[Jesus says,] "This is My body. . . . This is My blood." Matthew 26:26, 28

## Prayer

Lord Jesus, in the Sacrament of the Altar You give us Your body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine. Thank You for this gift, which gives us forgiveness of sins and strength to live for You. In Your saving name we pray. Amen.

## Jesus Gives the Lord's Supper

Matthew 26:26–29; Mark 14:22–25; Luke 22:14–23

It's no accident that Jesus chooses the Passover in Jerusalem as the backdrop to institute the Lord's Supper. Passover was—and is—the high point of the Jewish year. Jewish people from all over the region traveled for weeks to be present in the holy city to celebrate this event.

So, on this night, when Jerusalem was buzzing with celebration over lambs' blood on doorposts and liberation, Jesus, the lamb without defect, instituted the Lord's Supper, in which He gives His own body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and fortification of faith. Like the Passover lamb, soon Jesus' life will be required. He will surrender to the chief priests and teachers of the law. He will be flogged and nailed to a cross. His precious blood will be spread on wood, but not that of a doorpost; rather, a Roman cross—the instrument of His unjust murder and our redemption.

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# Everyday **FAITH** Family Page

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## Law/Gospel

I sin when I deny the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar. **Christ is truly present in the Sacrament through His body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine.**

## Bible Words

[Jesus says,] “This is My body. . . . This is My blood . . . for the forgiveness of sins.” Matthew 26:26, 28

## Prayer

Dear Jesus, help us to remember that in the Lord’s Supper, You are truly present through Your body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine. May we rejoice in the forgiveness of sins You won for us on the cross, promised to us in Your body and blood. In Your name we pray. Amen.

## The Emmaus Disciples See Jesus

Luke 24:13–35

It was the talk of the town. Jesus of Nazareth, the obscure carpenter’s son, had been arrested, condemned, and put to death on a Roman cross. Many people loved Jesus and looked to Him to usher in a new era for the Jews—freedom from the oppression and tyranny of Rome and then strength and prosperity for Israel. This Jewish leadership had other plans. In order to maintain their authority and position in society, the Pharisees, elders, and teachers of the law, among others, arranged to have Jesus arrested. Then they orchestrated His demise. In the midst of such exciting times, what else would two men on the road to Emmaus discuss?

Jesus cleverly brought together a number of events from the past to dramatically present Himself to Cleopas and his companion. Before His arrest and crucifixion, Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples and instituted the Lord’s Supper. This involved the breaking of the bread. On the road to Emmaus, our Lord taught them all things concerning Himself as had been presented in Moses and the prophets of the Old Testament. Then, sitting at table, Jesus broke bread, tying it all together.

All that was explained and predicted in the Old Testament was brought to fruition in Jesus on the cross. We truly receive Christ and the benefits of what He has done for us in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.



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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## Law/Gospel

I sin when I doubt God's power to heal my body and soul.

**Through His Word, Jesus gives me faith to believe that He heals all my illnesses of body and soul. Because His words do what they say, I can trust that I receive forgiveness of sins through His Supper.**

## Bible Words

Your sins are forgiven. . . . Your faith has saved you; go in peace. Luke 7:48, 50

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of faith You give us through Your Word and through Holy Baptism. We receive Your promises of forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and a home in heaven through the faith You give us. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may our faith in You continue to grow stronger throughout our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Jesus' Touch Heals

Matthew 9:20-25; Mark 5:21-43

In the course of His early ministry in Galilee, Jesus had performed numerous miracles to demonstrate His identity as God and His power over creation, sin, and death: casting out evil spirits and healing those with leprosy and paralysis. So it should come as no surprise that Jesus had gained a following. If not for His teaching about the kingdom of God and forgiveness, people flocked to Jesus for healing.

Jairus was one of those people. His little girl was at the point of death. If there was any hope, it was to be found in this healer from Nazareth. We can assume that he had tried every other conventional means. No physician of the time could save his daughter. Jairus had plenty to lose by associating with a carpenter who taught contrary to the Pharisees and teachers of the law. Yet, it was his daughter. Circumstances were much the same for the woman suffering from a discharge of blood. In the course of twelve years, it's likely she had exhausted normal means of healing.

Yet, the woman trusted in the Lord. In faith, she knew that Jesus' power was greater than some potion, magic spell, or ritual. She could be healed by nothing more than touching His garment.

Today, many place limitations on Jesus' work as well. Sure, Jesus died for my sins and rose from the dead, but can He be truly present in this wine and wafer? As a consequence of our doubts, we rob ourselves of the security and joy in life that God intends and we place ourselves in spiritual danger.



# Everyday **FAITH** Family Page

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## Law/Gospel

I sin when I do not forgive others because it shows that I do not trust that God forgives me. **Jesus gives me faith to believe in Him and trust that He forgives my sins. He enables me to forgive others.**

## Bible Words

As the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Colossians 3:13

## Prayer

Dear heavenly Father, You sent Your Son, Jesus, to die in our place to pay the price we owe You for our sins. Jesus' action on our behalf restored our relationship with You. For Jesus' sake, You forgive our sins. Fill us with the same forgiving love that You show us so that we can forgive others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Jesus Teaches about an Unforgiving Servant

Matthew 18:21–35

**P**eter sets things up for Jesus perfectly. How often shall we forgive? It's likely that Jesus' response frustrated or at least confused Peter. Our Lord's goal is to pique his attention. Rather than a specific number of times, Jesus' point is that forgiveness flows without limit.

With this in mind, Jesus' parable makes perfect sense. The king, having no debt whatsoever, comes to settle with his servants. Out of pure mercy, the king forgives the servant who owes him an immeasurable sum that the servant could never repay. We might assume that such an act of generosity would arouse the servant to similar benevolence. Not so. Ignoring or at least forgetting his master's mercy, the servant confronts a fellow servant to settle a relatively insignificant debt of three months' wages. Finding the servant unable to pay, the forgiven servant casts the other into prison.

Jesus' goal is that we connect ourselves to the first servant, recognizing God's immense mercy in Christ, forgiving our unpayable debt at His own expense at the cross. Yet, so often, we are quick to receive the Lord's forgiveness and slow to follow suit with our debtors.



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# Everyday FAITH Family Page

## Law/Gospel

Because of sin, I often deny Jesus by my words and actions and fail to live as His forgiven child. **God forgives my sins for Jesus' sake, strengthens my faith through His Word and Sacraments, and helps me live as His forgiven child, serving Him as I serve my neighbor.**

## Bible Words

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Acts 2:42

## Prayer

Dear God, thank You for the gift of faith in You that You have given us through Your Means of Grace. Make us ever eager to love and serve You as we share Your true Word with others through our words and actions. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## Timothy Lives as God's Child

1 Timothy 4:6–16; 2 Timothy 1:1–7

**A**round AD 60, Paul was taken as a prisoner to Rome, spending the winter on the island of Malta after the ship carrying him and other prisoners was shipwrecked. He was in Rome under house arrest for two years. After he was released from prison in Rome, Paul had further journeys, which we know about from his epistles. During this time, Paul wrote letters to his student Timothy, asking him to oversee and care for the brothers and sisters in Ephesus.

In order that Timothy would protect himself as well as those in his spiritual care, Paul charged his young friend to vehemently avoid false teachings. Drawing on his own experience with other congregations, Paul well realized how quickly and quietly false theology and philosophies can creep into a body of believers.

Timothy must not only avoid false teachings but also shun sinful behavior and immerse himself in the regular study of Scripture. In this manner, the Holy Spirit could educate and edify Timothy to become the leader Paul knew he could be.