



THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

*Daily Devotion at Zion + Sept. 13, 2020 AD + **Pentecost Season***

This Week: A Brief Summary

Repetition is the guardian of good learning.

As the holy apostle, St. Peter, writes, “I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have” (2 Peter 1:12). The book of Psalms also relies on repetition in a poetic way to develop ideas and imagery, and our Lord Jesus Himself frequently repeated His teachings, such as the predictions of His crucifixion and resurrection, knowing that the human heart doesn’t always hear things the first time. As Martin Luther once said, “Knowledge does not consist of many books, but of a few good books read many times.”

It’s seems good, then, to pause and recall everything that *The Shepherd’s Voice* has covered in the past few weeks.

The last 12 issues of *The Shepherd’s Voice* have laid out the basics of home and personal devotion. **Those basics are summarized on the back page of this issue.** From this point forward, *The Shepherd’s Voice* will build on that foundation, addressing other topics, blessings, and challenges in the practice of daily prayer. For example, upcoming issues will focus on prayer and children, devotion in the workplace, the ministry of angels, grief and loss, and prayer as combat. Since repetition is good, we’ll also return to the basics from time to time!

About the Cover Art

The Church has always used the imagery of ships to describe itself. Like the ark of Noah, the Church sails through life’s floods, safe with its captain, Jesus. This week’s cover features the famous painting by Rembrandt, “Storm on the Sea of Galilee,” depicting the events of Mark 4:35-41, in which a storm buffeted the ship of Jesus and His disciples. Bright light draws our eyes to the waves ready to devour the ship, but a second look reveals Jesus sitting calmly with His disciples in the dark.. It’s a powerful message: God abides with His Church in dark and stormy times. Regrettably, this famous painting was stolen in 1990 and never recovered.

The Highest Devotion and Worship: Faith

“Faith is that worship which received the benefits that God offers” (Lutheran Confessions, Apology IV:49).

“The greatest possible comfort comes from this doctrine that the highest worship in the Gospel is the desire to receive forgiveness of sins, grace, and righteousness” (Lutheran Confessions, Apology IV:309-310).

“This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him” (Matthew 17:5).

The purpose of home and personal devotion is to keep in step with the Spirit’s work of faith. The mere doing of these practices is not what pleases God, but that they convey His promises and Word to us, that we may have the consolation of trusting in His grace.

Daily Readings for the Week of Sept. 20 (Pentecost 16)

S	Job 11:1-9; 13-20 Revelation 5:1-14 Matthew 5:1-14	Acts 13:1-12 John 9:1-17
M	Job 12:1-6; 13-25 Acts 11:19-30 John 8:21-32	F Job 19:1-7, 14-27 Acts 13:13-25 John 9:18-41
T	Job 12:1; 13:3-17, 21-27 Acts 12:1-17 John 8:33-47	Sa Job 22:1-4, 21—23:7 Acts 13:26-43 John 10:1-18
W	Job 12:1; 14:1-22 Acts 12:18-25 John 8:47-59	<i>These readings correspond to pages 817-853 in Volume IV of <u>For All the Saints</u>. To acquire <u>For All the Saints</u> or other devotionals, please contact the church office.</i>
Th	Job 16:16-22; 17:1, 13-16	

Basic Features of Home and Personal Devotion in the Lutheran Church

1. **The Word of God.** Written in Holy Scripture and preached through the Church, God's Word is the heart of devotion.
2. **Home.** The Word of God transforms our homes, where we sleep and rise, into holy "preaching posts" of His Word.
3. **Time.** The Word of God starts each day at *sunset*, not sunrise, recalling that God's New Day of salvation always dawns when life is at its darkest moment.
4. **Evening.** The Lutheran Small Catechism provides bedtime prayers to mark the evening with God's Word.
5. **Morning.** As for bedtime, so do the Catechism's prayers for rising connect each new day with God's presence.
6. **Meals.** Thanksgiving at the table is a hallmark of the Church, neatly taught in the catechism's table prayers.
7. **Remembering Baptism.** Baptism gives us a Name, "the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," that marks both us and our devotion as God's.
8. **The Creed.** Confessing the creed confessed at our Baptism serves as simple, daily sermon of God's promises to us.
9. **The Lord's Prayer.** Our Lord graciously gives us prayers to use when we daily speak to Him, wherever we may be.
10. **The Ten Commandments.** God's law aids our confession of sins and reveals His true and redeeming character to us.
11. **Psalms and Hymns.** The poetry and music of the Church anoint both head and heart with the rhythms of God's Word.
12. **Cherishing Holy Communion.** The Church is what it eats, and this holy food inspires our weekly devotion as we recall its blessing and prepare to receive it once more.