

## FROM LUTHER'S PRAYERS:

Dear Father in heaven, for the sake of your dear Son Jesus Christ grant us your Holy Spirit, that we may be true learners of Christ, and therefore acquire a heart with a never-ceasing fountain of love. Amen

## FROM LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM:

### **The Lord's Prayer:**

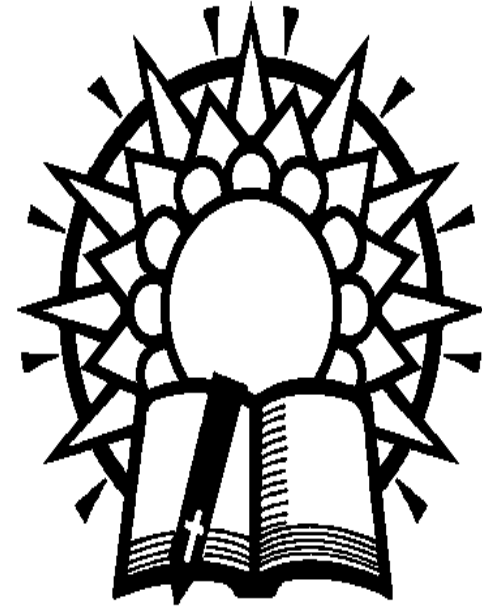
#### The Fifth Petition

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

#### *What is this?*

We ask in this prayer that our heavenly Father would not regard our sins or deny these petitions on their account, for we are worthy of nothing for which we ask, nor have we earned it. Instead we ask that God would give us all things by grace, for we sin daily and indeed earn only punishment. So, on the other hand, we, too, truly want to forgive heartily and do good gladly to those who sin against us.

## THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



*O God, we thank you for your Son who chose the path of suffering for the sake of the world. Humble us by his example, point us to the path of obedience, and give us strength to follow his commands; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

## **GOSPEL: Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around (Jesus), 2 they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. 3 (For the Pharisees, and all of the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders, 4 and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) 5 So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders but eat with defiled hands.” 6 He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written:

‘This people honors me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me’

7 in vain do they worship me;

teaching human precepts as doctrine.’

8 You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

14 Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: 15 there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but things that come out are what defile.”

21 “For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come; fornication, theft, murder, 22 adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. 23 All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.

## **Second Reading: James 1:17-27**

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. 18 In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of faith, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

19 You must understand this, my beloved; let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for your anger does not produce God’s righteousness. 21 Therefore rid yourself of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

22 But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. 23 For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror,

24 for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. 25 But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.

26 If any think they are religious, and so not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless.

27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this; to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

## **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN ?**

*Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth,  
that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.*

James i. 18.

The first thing and greatest thing which He has done for us from above is that He has begotten us and made us His children and heirs, so that we have become and are called ‘children born of God’. How, or by what means, did that happen? Through the Word of Truth.

Thus have we become firstborn of His creation, which is a new-begun creature and work of God. Thus He separates His new creation from the world and human creatures.

God has made for Himself a new creature which is so called because it is made by Him and is His work without any human help and skill. In virtue of this a Christian is called a new creature if God, which He Himself alone makes, above and besides all other creatures and works, yet in such a way that in this temporal life there is made but a beginning, and He works daily at it until it is perfected, when it will be a godly creature, pure and bright like the sun, without any sin and frailty, and all on fire with godly love.

*Sermon from the year, 1536.*

W.A. 45. 585 ff.

Taken from the book:

Day by Day We Magnify Thee by *Martin Luther*

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