

## *Crumbs – Good News for the Diaspora!*

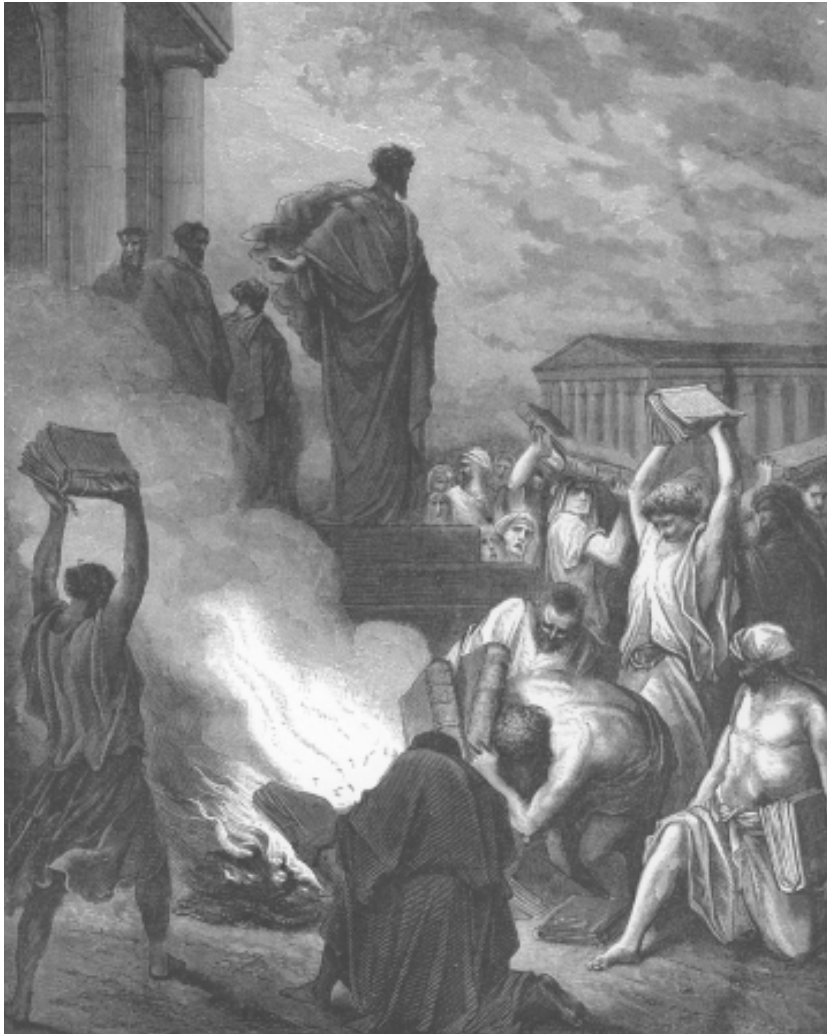


Illustration: Paul at Ephesus

A Devotional for the

Week of the Twenty-third Sunday after Trinity.

SUNDAY.

*And for me. – Ephesians 6:19.*

"And for me" –what? The Apostle Paul desired that the Christians, to whom he wrote, should pray also for him.

Indeed, all true Christians should do this for their pastors. And all faithful pastors earnestly desire their parishioners to pray for them. The devil hates no one more than faithful pastors. How necessary, therefore, is such intercessory prayer of their parishioners!

Do pray for your pastor, my dear Christian. Pray that God would put on him the whole armor of God, that he may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Pray that by the grace of God utterance may be given to your pastor, that he may open his mouth boldly, and that God may grant him grace to preach the true, pure, unadulterated Word, to make known the mystery of the Gospel whose messenger he is.

For the Gospel is a mystery, wholly unknown to man by nature, but revealed and made manifest through the Word of God, and through it alone. This Word your pastor must preach in all simplicity, in its truth and purity, unalloyed with any reflections of his own reason. To be able to do this is a gracious gift of God. Pray God to grant him this gift. Then the strength of God will be made perfect through his preaching. Pray God for this strength. And implore God to bestow on your pastor also this grace – that in all the requirements of his office he may cheerfully act and speak as he ought to act and speak according to the Word of God. Your pastor has been given to you by God, and you have helped to call him. Ask the Lord to bestow His blessings upon him abundantly.

*PRAYER.* – Lord God, dear Heavenly Father, I pray You to keep my pastor, whom You have appointed to me, in true faith and in a godly life. Also give utterance to him boldly to open his mouth to preach Your Word in its truth and purity, and at all times to speak and to act as he ought to do. Bless him, O God, and make him a source of blessing for me and for many, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Hymn 485, 1. 2.

Lord of the Church, we humbly pray  
For those who guide us in Thy way,  
    And speak Thy holy Word;  
With love divine their hearts inspire,  
And touch their lips with hallowed fire,  
    And needful strength afford.

Help them to preach the truth of God,  
Redemption through the Savior's blood;  
    Nor let the Spirit cease  
On all the Church His gifts to shower;  
To them a messenger of power,  
    To us, of life and peace.

MONDAY.

*Thine eyes shall see thy teachers; and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying: This is the way, walk ye in it.*

*– Isaiah 30:20-21.*

It is a most gracious favor of God for a congregation to have a pastor who preaches and teaches the Word of God in its truth and purity and with all simplicity. God promises this as a gracious gift to His people that wait on Him, saying: "Thine eyes shall see thy teachers; and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying: This is the way, walk ye in it."

Is not this a mark of God's gracious favor, if you, a child of God, desiring to go the way that leads to heaven, may see your teacher and hear from his lips the Word of God which will unmistakably show you the way which you must go to reach heaven, and which warns you against every deviation to the right or to the left? Tell me, if God is always with you through the word of your

pastor, and leads and guides and keeps you on the way His children should take to reach heaven, and always guards you against aberrations - is that not a wondrous gift of grace?

Therefore thank God unceasingly if He has given you such a preacher of the Gospel. And obey and follow your teacher and preacher, and do your part towards making him do his work with joy, by readily accepting his instruction, and do not cause him to grieve over you, for that is unprofitable for you. (Hebrews 13:17.) Yes, indeed, that is unprofitable for you. For the Lord Jesus says to those who truly preach His Word: "He that heareth you heareth Me; and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me." (Luke 10:16.)

*PRAYER.* – Help us, good Lord, my God, that we, Your children, may at all times have among us true and faithful teachers of Your Word, and that we may guard against false teachers, lest, being seduced into error, we be led away from You. Grant that, with singleness of heart, we may abide steadfast in Your Word to our end, and thus obtain salvation through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

Hymn 492, 1. 2.

THOU Who the night in prayer didst spend  
And then Thy twelve apostles send;  
And bidd'st us pray the harvest's Lord  
To send forth sowers of Thy Word,  
Hear, and Thy chosen servants bless  
With seven-fold gifts of holiness.

Oh, may Thy pastors faithful be,  
Not laboring for themselves, but Thee;  
Give grace to feed with wholesome food;  
The sheep and lambs bought by Thy blood;  
To tend Thy flock, and thus to prove  
How dearly they the Shepherd love!

## TUESDAY.

*Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. – Psalm 37:1.*

Anger, wrath, fretfulness, and envy would insinuate itself into our foolish heart when we see the evil-doers and the workers of iniquity prosper in this life. Why, say we, should the wicked prosper more than we, who are the children of God?

But, dear child of God, fret not yourself because of the evil-doers, nor be envious against the workers of iniquity. Fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way, and of him who brings wicked devices to pass. For listen! The evil-doers and workers of iniquity shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb; they shall be cut off; for yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yes, you shall diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. And where shall he be? Ah, the Lord shall break the arm of the wicked: the wicked shall perish; and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.

Therefore, O child of God, cease from anger, and forsake wrath, and leave off fretting and envying, lest you, too, be tempted to do evil, and you, too, become wicked, and you perish. For the children of God, who, it is true, are called the meek and lowly here on earth, but who in quietness and meekness wait on the Lord, yes, they shall "inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5), and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked. The Lord knows the days of the upright; and their inheritance, yes, their inheritance and treasure, shall be forever. The Lord upholds the righteous. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied. Oh, remain a child of God, and fret not yourself because of the evil-doers, neither be envious against the workers of iniquity.

*PRAYER.* – Lord God, dear Heavenly Father, give to me Your Holy Spirit, that I may have great peace and joy in being Your child and in resting in Your bosom, and that I may not fall into a sinful passion because of the seeming prosperity of the wicked, nor envy those who soon shall be destroyed. O Lord, I want to be Your own – here in time and thereafter in eternity, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hymn 385, 1. 2.

WHAT is the world to me,  
And all its vaunted pleasure,  
When Thou, and Thou alone,  
Lord Jesus, art my treasure!  
Thou only, dearest Lord,  
My soul's delight shalt be,  
Thou art my peace, my rest –  
What is the world to me!

The world is like the smoke,  
A fleeting exhalation,  
A shadow faint and dim  
Of very short duration;  
My Jesus doth abide,  
Though all things fade and flee;  
My everlasting Rock –  
What is the world to me!

## WEDNESDAY.

*The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. And the Lord shall laugh at him; for He seeth that his day is coming. – Psalm 37:12-13.*

The righteous man who walks in the ways of the Lord, who eschews evil and reproves it, is a thorn in the flesh to the wicked, as smoke to his eyes, and a sting in his conscience. And the wicked

plots against the just, and gnashes on him with his teeth, and draws out his sword and bends his bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as be of upright conversation, and watches the righteous, and seeks to slay him.

But the Lord, who rules all things, shall laugh at him, for He sees that the wicked is as nothing; He sees that his day is coming, the day of his downfall. Woe to him at whom the Lord laughs thus! The sword which he drew out against the just shall enter into his own heart, and his bow shall be broken.

Therefore, O child of God, be not afraid of the terror of the wicked, neither be troubled. Wait on the Lord, and keep His way; depart from evil, and do good, and you shall dwell forevermore, and the Lord shall exalt you when His time comes, and it shall be well with you. For the Lord loves judgment, and forsakes not His saints; they are preserved forever. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.

But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. When the wicked are cut off, you shall see it. How often one does see this even now! David says: "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo! he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." (vv. 35-36.) Yes, the wicked plot against the just. But the Lord will not leave him in his hand. The Lord will not condemn the just when the wicked judges him. Fear not!

*PRAYER.* – Lord, my God, I have You on my side. Why should I fear the plotting of the wicked? But do help me to abide with You and to keep Your way. Then You will keep me safely and let me abide forever, when the wicked and Your enemies perish. Let me be Yours forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

Hymn 495, 4.

Thy Word hath said, Thou art my rock,  
The fortress than can fear no shock,  
My help, my life, my treasure;

Howe'er distress And dangers press,  
All must perform Thy pleasure.

THURSDAY.

*Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. – Psalm 37:7.*

My dear Christian, you know that sometimes the sea that bears your life's frail bark runs very high in consequence of a heavy storm. Then all is dark as night. The tempest roars, the waves and the billows rise, and your skiff is threatened with destruction. You can not direct the course, you see nothing but destruction. What then? What should you do then? You must know that the Lord is with you. And then "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him." This is precious in the sight of the Lord, if you so rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. That pleases Him.

In each and every trouble commit your way to the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. When your enemies, the wicked, unjustly condemn and persecute you, then He, the Lord, shall bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him. Do not flutter and flee here and there, restlessly. Calmly stay where you are; do good; faithfully do your duty, do all in your power. Rest in the Lord! Know that He is but playing with you as a mother does with her child, as an eagle does with her young.

What of the fiercest storm, the direst need, if He is with you? Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him! Yes, smile as a little child does that is about to fall, when first attempting to walk, because its mother is right near. Try to spread your wings as young eagles do that are about to fall, but whose mother takes them up on her wings. Delight yourself in the Lord. He shall give you the desires of your heart: salvation, O salvation! Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him!

*PRAYER.* – Lord Jesus, You are mine and I am Yours. And You love me, and You are almighty. And You are always with me. Therefore, when trouble arises, great trouble, then help, O help me, Lord Jesus, to rest in You, and joyfully and patiently to wait for You. You shall help me. Amen.

Hymn 525, 1.

COMMIT whatever grieves thee  
At heart, and all thy ways,  
To Him who never leaves thee,  
On whom creation stays,  
Who freest courses maketh  
For clouds and air, and wind,  
And who care ever taketh  
A path for thee to find.

FRIDAY.

*Such as be blessed of Him shall inherit the earth; and they that be cursed of Him shall be cut off.* – *Psalms 37:22.*

In the Lord's kingdom, which extends over all, there are such as are blessed of Him, and such as are cursed of Him. They that are blessed of Him are those whom from eternity, impelled solely by His grace, for Christ's sake, the Lord has chosen and predestinated with the purpose of blessing them, and whom in time He made partakers, through faith, of this blessing through His Word and the Holy Spirit, so that now they live and walk according to His Word as His blessed children, and wait for eternal life. All this is solely the grace of God and in no respect whatever to be attributed to any work, doing, conduct, or merit of God's blessed children themselves.

Those who are cursed of the Lord are those whom the Lord from eternity, impelled by His grace, for Christ's sake, most earnestly

desired to bless, and whom in time He sought to make partakers, through faith, of this blessing through His Word and the Holy Spirit, but who would not have this blessing, and would not have Him, so that now they live and walk according to their own imaginations and lusts as the cursed of the Lord, and dash headlong into their own destruction. And all this is entirely their fault and in no respect whatever the Lord's will or doing; nor is it because the Lord had neglected them in any way.

Now, such as are blessed of Him shall inherit the earth. The earth on which they live is theirs by the will of God ; it belongs to them. And when that saying shall become manifest: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth," then shall it also become manifest that the earth is theirs and belongs to them alone.

But they that he cursed of Him shall be cut off. God permits them to live on earth a while yet, and is long-suffering with them. But he that continues in his evil mind shall at last be cut off, he shall not see the new heaven and the new earth; he shall be damned.

*PRAYER.* – My God, I give thanks to You that You have made me, the unworthy sinner, a partaker in faith of Your blessing through Your pure grace for Christ's sake, and have thus given me the sure hope of eternal life. I pray You, with all my heart, to keep me in the true faith, and to let me remain blessed forever. Amen.

Hymn 341, 4-6.

Not so th' ungodly race,  
They no such blessings find;  
Their hopes shall flee like empty chaff  
Before the driving wind.

How will they bear to stand  
Before that judgment-seat,  
Where all the saints at Christ's right hand  
In full assembly meet?

He knows and He approves  
The way the righteous go:  
But sinners and their works shall meet  
A dreadful overthrow.

### SATURDAY.

*Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace. – Psalm 37:37.*

Child of God, blessed of the Lord, believing Christian, mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, and be likewise! Be not like the wicked who borrows and pays not again, but on the contrary, be merciful and give and lend gladly to those who are in need. Let your mouth speak the wisdom which the Word of God teaches, and let your tongue talk the judgments of God. Let the Law of God be in your heart. Then shall your steps be ordered by the Lord; and He delights in your way. Though you stumble and fall, you shall not be utterly cast down and away; for the Lord holds you by your right hand, and raises you and sustains you. The Lord will not permit your footsteps to slip. The Lord helps you. The Lord shall help you and deliver you. Trust in the Lord! He is your strength in the time of trouble. He shall deliver you from the wicked and save you.

The Lord blesses you. And do you know what David says by the Holy Ghost? He says: "I have been young, and now I am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." (v, 25.) The transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off. But do mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, and be like him; for the end of that man is peace.

Many a distress may come upon you, if so be the kind will of God, your heavenly Father. But in the end, yes, in the end, you shall see and experience and witness, even here on earth, that your end is peace, if you go in the ways of God. And at the very last - mark well! these ways lead into heaven. And "all's well that ends well"; is it not so? Yes, "mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

*PRAYER.* – Lord God, dear Heavenly Father, who has made me Your dear child, and has so profusely showered blessings on me, I pray You to help me to be perfect and upright as becomes a child of Yours, and as Your Holy Ghost moves me to be. Hold me by my hand and do not let my footsteps slip. Raise me when I fall. And let my end be peace according to Your Word. And finally give me eternal life through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Hymn 349, 6.

O keep me watchful, then, and humble,  
And suffer me no more to stray;  
Uphold me when my feet would stumble,  
Nor let me loiter by the way;  
Fill all my nature with Thy light,  
O Radiance strong and bright!

These devotions are adapted from *Crumbs* by C. M. Zorn (1914).  
The hymn stanzas are from *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* (1918).  
The illustration is from *The Doré Bible Gallery* (circa 1885).  
As long as they are free to others, you may make copies of this devotional.  
For more devotionals or to support *Good News for the Diaspora*, please visit  
[www.scholia.net](http://www.scholia.net)