

# An Order of Worship for the Home

November 22, 2020  
Guest Pastor – Gary Mohr

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*This service is written for two speakers. Ideally, family members can speak and declare God's grace to one another following this format. For those who live alone, this worship outline can be followed with a brother or sister in Christ over the phone. You may call on a friend to fill this role, or your elder or pastor can worship with you by phone.*

*There is an "offering prayer" included in this outline. As we shelter in place, please continue to worship through giving. You can mail offering envelopes and checks to Calvary or visit [www.calvaryslz.org](http://www.calvaryslz.org) to give online.*

## Invocation

Reader 1: We gather to worship. We gather to pray.  
Reader 2: We gather to our God and to his word.  
Reader 1: We gather in the name of our God who is...  
Reader 2: Father, Son and Holy Spirit...  
Together: Amen.

## Psalm 95: 1-7a

1 Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!  
2 Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!  
  
3 For the Lord is a great God,  
and a great King above all gods.  
4 In his hand are the depths of the earth;  
the heights of the mountains are his also.  
5 The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands formed the dry land.  
  
6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;  
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!  
7 For he is our God,  
and we are the people of his pasture,  
and the sheep of his hand

## Confession & Absolution

*Make sure each person present has opportunity to confess to a brother or sister in faith. Go through both parts as many times as needed to accommodate all who are gathered. (From the order of Compline, Lutheran Service Book p.254)*

Christian Confessing: I confess to God Almighty, before the whole company of heaven and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.

Christian Responding: The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all your sins.

Together: Amen

### Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24

<sup>11</sup> “For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. <sup>12</sup> As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. <sup>13</sup> And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. <sup>14</sup> I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. <sup>15</sup> I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. <sup>16</sup> I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.

<sup>20</sup> “Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. <sup>21</sup> Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, <sup>22</sup> I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. <sup>23</sup> And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. <sup>24</sup> And I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the Lord; I have spoken.

### Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### Matthew 25:31-46

<sup>31</sup> “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. <sup>32</sup> Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. <sup>33</sup> And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. <sup>34</sup> Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. <sup>35</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup> I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ <sup>37</sup> Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? <sup>38</sup> And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? <sup>39</sup> And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ <sup>40</sup> And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

<sup>41</sup> “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. <sup>42</sup> For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, <sup>43</sup> I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ <sup>44</sup> Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ <sup>45</sup> Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ <sup>46</sup> And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

### Message

#### **Are You Prepared for Your Final Exam?**

Today is the last Sunday of the church year. Next Sunday we will begin a new church year with the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent. Therefore we must face the question that Jesus asks us — “Are you prepared for your final exam?”

When you were in high school or college do you remember what happened in May and June? It was time to prepare for the joy of taking your finals. You studied hard to prepare for your final exams because a large percentage of your grade was determined by how you did on this one test. More than a few all-nighters have been pulled in preparation for the final exam. Do you still recall how you felt as the test was handed out? You knew immediately either that you were going to do well on the test, or you discovered that you had studied for the wrong test and were doomed to fail.

In today's Gospel lesson, Jesus tells us that our final exam is coming and it's called Judgement Day. Are you prepared? Will it be a day of celebration or a day of failure?

Jesus describes this day in very BIG terms. He tells us that there really is a heaven and a hell. And for those who would like to think that heaven is eternal, but hell is not – listen to Jesus' own words:

*And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (Matthew 25:46)*

He reminds us that both heaven and hell are real and they will last forever. Some think that sermons last for an eternity, however, to us preachers our sermons are always super short. But no matter how you count it, eternity in heaven or hell will make a whole lot of difference.

What is heaven and what is hell? Jesus describes them as total opposites. To those on his right Jesus says COME. To those on His left, He says DEPART. Paul reflected this thought in 2 Thessalonians 1:9 as he describes hell as total separation from God forever. The verse leading into Matthew 25:31, Jesus tells us that in hell, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Revelation 20 calls hell a lake of fire - like a big lava pit. Imagine living without God forever. In hell there is No longer God's love. No place to turn to God in prayer. Hell is an eternity of emptiness, darkness and burning heat forever.

The opposite is a description of heaven. Heaven is living in the eternal PRESENCE of God. Forever dwelling in God's grace - enjoying His majesty, in the mansion He prepared for us.

Listen to Revelation 7:

*“Therefore they are before the throne of God,  
and serve him day and night in his temple;  
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his  
presence.*

*16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;  
the sun shall not strike them,  
nor any scorching heat.  
17 For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their  
shepherd,  
and he will guide them to springs of living water,  
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”  
(Revelation 7:15-17)*

Jesus tells us that heaven is, “the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.” (Matthew 25:34) Note, Jesus doesn’t say that the kingdom of heaven was prepared after sin entered the world BUT God prepared heaven for us since the creation of the world. God has always wanted to give His people heaven.

BUT hell is a different matter. He calls it, “the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.” (Matthew 25:41) Hell was not originally made for humans. It was made for the devil and his evil, deceptive angels. This shows that God didn’t pre-ordain that humanity would sin and die. The truth is that God does not want anyone to perish in hell.

However, today it is God’s will that everyone will go either: 1) to eternal happiness with God in heaven or 2) to eternal sorrow and agony with Satan in hell. There is no in between. This is what everyone will face when Judgement Day comes. It’s going happen whether you Like it or not!

Remember the main question is not “What is heaven and hell like?”, but “Where are you going?” It’s amazing how many people think they will end up in heaven.

A recent Barna study tells us that 8 in 10 Americans believe in life after death. To the question, where will you spend eternity when you die? 64% said that they are headed for heaven while only 1/2% said that they were headed for hell.

Why do people believe that they are going to heaven? The majority answer, “*I’ve been a pretty good person I do good things for people.*”

So what does Jesus say about our chances of going to either heaven or hell? Jesus refers to those on the left as having been “cursed”, while he says that those on his right “are blessed.” How are we blessed? Jesus says that the righteous receive an inheritance that makes them “righteous.”

Now listen to who is cursed.

*All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to*

*do everything written in the Book of the Law.” Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, “The righteous will live by faith.” (Galatians 3:10-12)*

So how is someone blessed or cursed according to God’s Word? The cursed are RELYING on their own ability to keep the law perfectly. IT’S LIKE A PERSON WHO CRAMS FOR THEIR FINAL EXAM THE NIGHT BEFORE. It can’t be done because you and I must live our entire life sin free. Did you hear that? Jesus says if you want to earn heaven you must be perfect.

In fact the Word of God is very clear. The law promises the riches of heaven - but the only way to get to heaven on our own is to be perfect. And when we try to keep each law perfectly, we fail. As a result the Word of God condemns everyone. Because you and I have not lived a perfect life we are under the curse of God’s wrath. The slightest error condemns us all. Not one person has lived a perfect life.

So what is our hope? Being a righteous person is quite different from trying to earn your own way to heaven. It is the inherited righteousness we have received freely from Jesus. Jesus has traded our sins and failures for His perfection. Jesus won our inheritance for us. And he gives it freely to all who believe in Him.

Listen to Galatians 3:13-14:

*Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit. (Galatians 3:13-14)*

Friends, there are two things that will enable you to stand on the right side of Jesus on Judgment Day, and two things alone. They are (1) the grace of God and (2) the merits of Christ. These are the reason for your salvation. It is only by the grace of God that you have been given the precious gift of faith to trust in your Lord Jesus Christ. This saving faith has brought you to despair of your own righteousness and to cling unswervingly to the perfect obedience of Jesus. Jesus did all the work. He kept the Law of God perfectly for you and me. And then He obediently went to the cross to die as payment for your sins and mine. He is the acceptable sacrifice for you and me.

These are the reasons we can pass our finals on Judgment Day with flying colors.

Our preparations for Judgement Day began at our Baptism. That’s when God

gave us His grace and the merits of Jesus became ours. There our old sinful nature was drowned and died and Jesus rose us to our new gift of life.

Whether you like it or not, Judgment Day is coming. It does not matter who you are. It does not matter where you are, it does not matter what you are. God says,

*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. (2 Corinthians 5:10).*

There is no escape. You are either on the right or the left of Jesus and you will face judgment. Thankfully—praise God!—with Jesus himself as our Savior and our

Friend, we have passed our ultimate final exam. The fear of judgment has been defeated by Jesus and we inherit the gift of everlasting life with God in heaven.

The Good News is that although all of us are sinners. The Holy Spirit has given us the gift of faith that invites us to “come and inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” Praise God!

Amen.

### Offering Prayer

*If you have an offering present as you worship, you may place your hands over it during the offering prayer.*

Reader 1: With thankful hearts we receive from you, O Lord.

Reader 2: With thankful hearts we respond.

Reader 1: Receive our thanks and praise.

Reader 2: Receive our offerings.

Together: Receive us as your own.

### Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

*Share prayer requests with one another. Pray over the requests shared, then pray the Lord's Prayer together.*

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.  
Amen.

**Blessing** (Numbers 6:24-26)

Reader 1: The Lord bless you and keep you.

Reader 2: The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

Reader 1: The Lord look upon you with favor...

Reader 2: And give you peace.

Together: Amen.

*As applicable, please share this resource with others who would benefit. An electronic version is available at [www.calvaryslz.org](http://www.calvaryslz.org). We can also add friends to our mailing list if that is preferred.*

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