

Sentence of Scripture

Be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love,
As Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.

Ephesians 5.1–2

Prayer of the day

Grant, O Lord,
that we may see in you the fulfilment of all our need,
and may turn from every false satisfaction
to feed on the true and living bread
that you have given us in Jesus Christ;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Readings

2 Samuel 18:5–9, 14, 31–33

⁵ The king ordered Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, “Deal gently for my sake with the young man Absalom.” And all the people heard when the king gave orders to all the commanders concerning Absalom. ⁶ So the army went out into the field against Israel; and the battle was fought in the forest of Ephraim. ⁷ The men of Israel were defeated there by the servants of David, and the slaughter there was great on that day, twenty thousand men. ⁸ The battle spread over the face of all the country; and the forest claimed more victims that day than the sword. ⁹ Absalom happened to meet the servants of David. Absalom was riding on his mule, and the mule went under the thick branches of a great oak. His head caught fast in the oak, and he was left hanging between heaven and earth, while the mule that was under him went on.

¹⁴ Joab said, “I will not waste time like this with you.” He took three spears in his hand, and thrust them into the heart of Absalom, while he was still alive in the oak.

³¹ Then the Cushite came; and the Cushite said, “Good tidings for my lord the king! For the LORD has vindicated you this day, delivering you from the power of all who rose up against you.” ³² The king said to the Cushite, “Is it well with the young man Absalom?” The Cushite answered, “May the enemies of my lord the king, and all who rise up to do you harm, be like that young man.” ³³ The king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, he said, “O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would I had died instead of you, O Absalom, my son, my son!” (NRSV)

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

Psalm 130

1 Out of the depths have I called to you, O Lord:

Lord, hear my voice;

2 O let your ears consider well:

the voice of my supplication.

3 If you, Lord, should note what we do wrong:

who then, O Lord, could stand?

4 But there is forgiveness with you:

so that you shall be feared.

5 I wait for the Lord, my soul waits for him:

and in his word is my hope.

6 My soul looks for the Lord:

**more than watchmen for the morning,
more, I say, than watchmen for the morning.**

7 O Israel, trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy:

and with him is ample redemption.

8 He will redeem Israel:

from the multitude of their sins.

Ephesians 4:25–5.2

²⁵ So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. ²⁶ Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and do not make room for the devil. ²⁸ Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy. ²⁹ Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. ³¹ Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, ³² and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. ¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, ² and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. (NRSV)

Hear the word of the Lord, **thanks be to God.**

John 6:35, 41–51

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ **Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.**

³⁵ Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

⁴¹ Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” ⁴² They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?” ⁴³ Jesus answered them, “Do not complain among yourselves. ⁴⁴ No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. ⁴⁶ Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. ⁵⁰ This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. ⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” (NRSV)

This is the Gospel of our Lord, **praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.**