

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, July 20th, 2025
Rev. Gerry Gallant**

**The Sheep
Proper 11
John 10:22-30**

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it;
**for he has founded it on the seas,
and established it on the rivers.**

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?
And who shall stand in his holy place?
**Those who have clean hands and pure hearts,
who do not lift up their souls to what is false,
and do not swear deceitfully.**

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Holy and loving Father,
we come to you today,
some with hopes or fears,
some with convictions or doubts,
some with pain or joy.

By your Holy Spirit, Lord
help us to see all things in our lives
through the light of your Word,
our Lord Jesus Christ.

In our worship today,
Lord help us to pray honestly,
to listen attentively,
and to encourage one another to in our walk of faith.

And through your presence in our lives,
help us to grow in the grace and knowledge
of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,
who with you and the Holy Spirit
lives and reigns forever.
All glory to you, both now and forever! **Amen.**

Children's Hymn #328: "This is My Father's World"

This is my Father's world,
 And to my listening ears
 All nature sings, and round me rings
 The music of the spheres.
 This is my Father's world:
 I rest me in the thought
 Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas--
 His hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world:
 The birds their carols raise,
 The morning light, the lily white,
 Declare their Maker's praise.
 This is my Father's world:
 He shines in all that's fair;
 In the rustling grass I hear Him pass,
 He speaks to me everywhere.

This is my Father's world:
 O let me ne'er forget
 That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
 God is the Ruler yet.
 This is my Father's world:
 Why should my heart be sad?
 The Lord is King: let the heavens ring!
 God reigns; let earth be glad!

Call to Confession**Prayer of Confession**

Have mercy on me, O God, in your faithful love,
 in your great tenderness wipe away my offences;
 wash me thoroughly from my guilt,
 purify me from my sin.

For I am well aware of my offences,
 my sin is constantly in mind.
 Against you, you alone, I have sinned,

I have done what you see to be wrong,
 that you may show your saving justice when you pass sentence,
 and your victory may appear when you give judgment,
 remember, I was born guilty,
 a sinner from the moment of conception.

But you delight in sincerity of heart,

and in secret you teach me wisdom.
 God, create in me a clean heart,
 renew within me a resolute spirit,
 do not thrust me away from your presence,
 do not take away from me your spirit of holiness.
 Give me back the joy of your salvation,
 sustain in me a generous spirit.

Sacrifice gives you no pleasure,
 burnt offering you do not desire.
 Sacrifice to God is a broken spirit,
 a broken, contrite heart you never scorn
 Lord, open my lips,
 and my mouth will speak out your praise now and forever.

Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news!
 The LORD is faithful in all his words,
 and gracious in all his deeds.
 The LORD upholds all who are falling,
 and raises up all who are bowed down.

The Lord's Prayer

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one
 For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
 Forever and ever, Amen.**

Hymn #496: "Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet"

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet
 and a light unto my path.

When I feel afraid, think I've lost my way,
 still you're there right beside me,
 and nothing will I fear as long as you are near.
 Please be near me to the end.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet
 and a light unto my path.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet
 and a light unto my path.

I will not forget your love for me,
and yet my heart forever is wandering.
Jesus, be my guide and hold me to your side,
and I will love you to the end.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet
and a light unto my path.

Responsive Reading

Psalm 86: 10-17

10 For you are great and do wondrous things;
you alone are God.

**11 Teach me your way, O LORD,
that I may walk in your truth;
unite my heart to fear your name.**

12 I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart,
and I will glorify your name forever.

**13 For great is your steadfast love toward me;
you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.**

14 O God, insolent men have risen up against me;
a band of ruthless men seeks my life,
and they do not set you before them.

**15 But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.**

16 Turn to me and be gracious to me;
give your strength to your servant,
and save the son of your maidservant.

**17 Show me a sign of your favor,
that those who hate me may see and be put to shame
because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.**

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

John 10:22-30

²² At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." ²⁵ Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, ²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

Sermon

There is something very interesting that is passed over by many people as they read the book of John in the Scripture we are studying today, and it is in those first two verses.

John 10:22-23

²² At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon.

If you can recall in last week's sermon, I reminded you how the confrontation that Jesus was in with the religious leaders had been a constant progression over just a few days, even though it comprised many chapters of the book of John.

However, right here in the midst of chapter 10, we are taking a leap 2 months forward. Last week's script took place the day following the Feast of Tabernacles, the booths, and this week we are told that it is now the Feast of Dedication.

Well, the Feast of Tabernacles takes place in late September or early October. The Feast of Dedication, or as we know it Hanukkah, takes place in December.

So, we are being shown how months later, Jesus is still in confrontation with the religious leaders, over the healing that he had done on the man who had been blind. The Religious leaders were still seeking out a way to be rid of Jesus and his influence over the people.

We are also being shown by John in today's scripture how Jesus is still trying to get those religious leaders to understand firstly that they are not the shepherds of God's people and in today's Scripture, he will tell them that perhaps they themselves are not God's people, once again insinuating that they are the children of the devil, as he had told them just a few months prior.

The setting for today's Scripture is the colonnade of Solomon, a large patio area that was around the temple itself. Jesus was likely in this area because of a winter storm, seeking some cover as he was spending time in the temple during the feast.

John 10:24

²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

The Religious leaders are still upset that Jesus is there in their presence. They surround him, almost like a gang, ensuring that he has no way to escape this time. We know this because the Greek that is used implies that they were hostile towards him, badgering and harassing him to answer their question.

John 10:25-27

²⁵ Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, ²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.

Jesus tells them, 'I have told you plainly, many times over I have told you who I am'. If you can remember back over the last few weeks, Jesus has made it abundantly clear who he is. He has said that he is the bread of life, the living water, the light of the world and even the great 'I AM.'

Jesus has told these religious leaders over and over and in a multitude of ways that he is God, yet they refuse to listen to what he says. So, he challenges them to look at the works that he has done, the incredible teachings, the miraculous feeding, and the unheard-of healings that he has done all witnessed by multitudes of people.

Jesus is clearly pointing out to them that anyone with a rational and open mind would hear his words, see his works, and know that he is indeed God.

But they will not believe, they refuse to see all of the evidence right there before their eyes, because to do so would require them to change the way that they live.

Jesus tells them quite plainly and quite clearly once again, you are not my sheep, you are not of my flock, my people.

Jesus is speaking to the Jewish religious leaders and telling them that they are not one of his sheep.

These are the people, more than any other Jewish people, who should know their Scripture and have their eyes open always seeking out the coming of the Messiah.

Yet, the Messiah is right there in front of them and they cannot see him because he is not what they want him to be.

Also make not that even though they were Jews, people born into the nation of God's chosen people, they are not his sheep. God has children, not grandchildren. You need to have a proper relationship with him for salvation, it is not guaranteed because you were born into a family of believers.

God's people live in relationship with him.

John 10:27-30

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

This is an incredibly reassuring piece of Scripture. Jesus Christ himself is making a very power statement about what it means to be one of his sheep.

If you are one of his sheep, if you obey his voice, if you follow his ways, you will be given eternal life.

And no one, NO ONE, can ever take that away from you!

To make it clear in the Greek this statement is emphatic and repeated.

If we were to try to directly translate this into English it would be something like, 'no one, no, no one, can ever-ever snatch you out of My Father's hand.'

Do you see how powerful that is, once you belong to God, nothing can separate you.

This is some of the strongest text in the Bible dealing with the doctrine of the security of the believer.

One of the most common questions that pastor's face in the world today is, 'Can someone lose their salvation?' or 'Is it possible for someone who is a believer to stop believing in God?'

Simply put, can you be born again, baptized by the Holy Spirit, go to church, read your Bible, pray, follow Christ and do all the things that a Christian does and then fall away from Christ to such a point that you need to start all over.?

Do you need to be reborn again, again? Do you need to get saved again, or can you even be saved again?

This is a very practical question in the world we live in where we see people deconstructing their faith and walking away from Christianity. And that is part of the reason I want to talk about it more in-depth today.

It is a deep and complex theological issue, and it is one that we will not be able to clear up completely. In fact, it has been an issue that Church leaders, theologians and Christians have been discussing for close to two thousand years.

However, I want to share with you what this Scripture says, and how some people differ on the idea of the doctrine of the security of the believer, so if you are ever asked the question, you have a place to begin in your sharing of the faith with others.

It is also important to note that this is not a doctrine that the church should be divided over, much like whether a baptism is a sprinkle or a dunk, whether it must be wine or grape juice will do, or even the when/where and if of the rapture. This is a point of discussion and debate among Christians, not one of division.

There are a whole bunch of Christians who believe that it is possible for a Christian to lose their salvation. They believe that it is possible for someone to be reborn, baptized by the Holy Spirit and then turn their back to God and walk away.

They are known as Armenians, because they are following the teachings of James Arminius, a Dutch reformed minister who lived in the late 1500's.

The teachings of Arminius, that you can lose your salvation, is the theology of many denominations still today. Most Methodists, Wesleyans, and Pentecostal churches believe and teach that it is possible for someone to lose their salvation.

The other major theological camp is Calvinism, someone who follows the teachings of John Calvin, who was one of the fathers of the Reformation. This group believes that once you are saved you can never lose your salvation. They use the term perseverance of the saints, meaning once you are truly saved you will progressively, and at some times in your life through great difficulty, continue in your walk with the Lord. Changing from who you were into who God is calling for you to be.

They believe that you are saved by the grace and mercy of God, and that you are not kept there by anything that you do, not by your own works, not by your own righteousness, not by your own failings, not by your own sin, but only because of the love, grace and mercy of our Savior.

This is the primary teaching of Presbyterian, Reformed Churches, and many Baptist churches.

Charles Caldwell Ryrie explained it this way.

Eternal security is the work of God which guarantees that the gift of salvation, once received, is forever and cannot be lost. The concept of eternal security emphasizes God's activity in guaranteeing the eternal possession of the gift of eternal life. It relates to those the Holy Spirit regenerates and its veracity does not rest upon feelings or experiences.

-Charles C. Ryrie

Your salvation is not dependent on how you feel and what you experience in this world.

How many of you have had a day in which you do not feel saved, a day when you might fall into sin, or a day where it seems like God is nowhere near you?

We all have experienced a day like that!

The doctrine of the security of the believer tells us that we do not go by our feelings, after all they are what usually lead us astray and into sin. Instead, we are to turn to the Word of God and what the God who cannot lie has told his people.

The Word of God tells us that a true Christian can never be lost.

TRUE Christian. Many times we have people in this world take on the title of Christian in their life, however they are not a believer. They might even think that they are a true Christian because they are doing all the Christian things that they are told to do.

Then they walk away from Christianity, and we are left asking ourselves, are they saved? Were they ever really saved? Will they go to heaven?

The truth is we do not know, only God knows their heart and what they truly believed. Maybe they are a prodigal son who will one day leave the pigpen of the world and return to the Lord.

Or perhaps they were never really saved, never really baptized by the Holy Spirit, and therefore never had salvation to lose.

This is a reminder for us to be examining our hearts as I told you a few weeks ago. Seeking out the foundation of our own faith, is it in the Jesus Christ of the Bible, are we living by his Word, even when we do not like what he says, or have we created our own version of God, so we can live the life we choose.

If you are a true believer, if you have truly humbled yourself, set aside your own sinfulness, your own desires and picked up your cross to follow Christ, then you cannot lose your salvation. There may be periods of trials, there may be temptations and tribulations. Justification, being saved, and Sanctification, being Holy are often have a long life filled with difficulties, challenges and changes separating them.,

We know this because true believers are sheep, they follow the Shepherd.

Remember that there are sometimes sheep in the sheepfold that do not belong to the shepherd. Too often we forget that Judas Iscariot was a follower of Jesus Christ. Judas turned his back on God, he followed Christ but for all the wrong reasons.

The same is true in the world today, there are still people in the sheepfold, there are still people in the pulpit for the wrong reasons. Jesus called them thieves and robbers, people who are seeking out their own will and purpose, seeking the justification of their own lives here on earth, rather than humbly submitting to the Word of God.

True believers, His sheep, follow Him.

John 10:27-30

²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

Jesus tells us clearly His sheep, know His voice, and obediently follow Him. This means that if you are one of his sheep, you are living your life differently than the rest of the world. It means you are obeying the Word of God even when it makes you an enemy of the world, and enemies of your friends or co-workers or even an enemy of your family or yourself. This is why it is called the perseverance of the saints, if you are a true believer you will wrestle with God's Word in your life and change, not just call yourself a Christian and live like you always have.

And to those who are true believers, those saints who do persevere, Jesus promises to give eternal life.

Think about that for a moment. Jesus gives true believers eternal life.

If you have eternal life and you lose eternal life, you never actually had eternal life.

Eternal life is eternal; you cannot get it and lose it.

The moment that you are a true believer, the moment you are baptized by the Holy Spirit, that very instant that you are born again, you are justified in the eyes of God and granted eternal life. And because it is eternal life given by God it cannot be lost or taken away from you.

That justification in the eyes of God happens the instant you believe, the sanctification process, the changing from who you were, the sinful nature you have, the person you are in the eyes of the world, that is why we need perseverance. Because we will fail, we will fall, we will struggle with our sin, but we will not accept it or justify it in our lives. That is one of the ways in which a true believer and a religious person differ, the true believer struggles with their life as they pursue a closer walk with God, as the Holy Spirit points their sins out to them, through the Word of God, they wrestle with them and change.

1 John 1:9-10 says.

1 John 1:9-10

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

As we walk with Christ we persevere, knowing that we have been given eternal life from our Savior.

Ephesians 2:8-10

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Do you see what is being said here? God's gift to his sheep is eternal life, not because of anything we did, but because we are his. We are his. This does not give us a license to go and live anyway we want. We cannot live a sinful life and believe that we are truly walking with the Good Shepherd and listening to His voice.

When we are true believers, we cannot be taken away from the Good Shepherd. This means that the sins of this world cannot take us away from God. They might tempt us, they might cause us to stumble, but we will never pursue them on our own, because we seek to follow the voice of the Good Shepherd.

Satan and all the sins in this world cannot steal us away from God.

There are some people who say that even though Satan may not be able to snatch us away from God, we can do so ourselves. We can give ourselves over to sin and therefore snatch ourselves from the hand of God and lose our salvation.

However, I would disagree.

If you are a true believer, you would never want to walk away from a God who sacrificed himself for your salvation because you understand what he has done.

You cannot snatch yourself from the hand of God. No one means no one, and that includes you.

So, the only way that you could walk away from God is if you never really belonged to God, you were never really one of his sheep, a Judas Iscariot in the flock of God.

True believers, those who have humbly submitted to the Word of God in their lives, can never, no never-ever be snatched from the hand of our Lord and Savior.

Which brings us to the ultimate question that you might be asking yourself right now.

Am I one of the sheep?

Do I really believe?

If you find yourself caught up asking that question right now, then now is the time to get right with Jesus Christ. To be honest about the sins in your life and to come before him and repent, to lay out your sinful nature before him and seek his mercy and his grace in your life.

Become a true believer and find the security in salvation that they possess.

Know that the omnipotent God holds you in his hand, the all-powerful God holds you in his hand.

1 Peter 1:3-5

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Know that God has a purpose for His people and their salvation.

Romans 8:28-31

²⁸ And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. ³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

The sheep belong to God, they are called, they are justified and then they are glorified.

There is no chance of this not being true. One you belong to God, the very instant you are justified your spot in his eternal kingdom is guaranteed.

Jesus died on the cross for your sins, past present and future. His blood paid all of the debt you could ever owe.

Romans 8:32

³² He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

Once you are one of his Sheep you can rest assured in your salvation because Jesus paid the entire debt of your sin. You can rest assured in your salvation because Jesus is sitting in heaven right now at the right hand of the father interceding for you.

You can have the perseverance of the saints in all things because nothing in this world can separate us from the love of the Good Shepherd. The sheep, the true believer knows that we will suffer in this world because of our faith, but nothing can separate us from our God.

Why? Because the Holy Spirit is with us. The Holy Spirit is within us the moment we submit to the Lord. The Holy Spirit is what regenerates us, what burns the sin out of our lives, what causes us to change from our sinful nature to our righteous nature as we walk on this planet. It is only through the power of God, that we change, we cannot do it ourselves. This is why James says that there will be evidence of the Holy Spirit in our lives because we will change.

Again, think about that, when you got saved, when you gave your life over to Jesus Christ, something changed in you. The Holy Spirit gave you a new heart, you were eternally changed. REBORN.

You cannot un-reborn yourself. When you were baptized by the Holy Spirit you were born into the family of God.

Even in this world, kids can run away from their parents, not talk to their parents, even legally disown their parents, but they are still the biological children of their parents.

Once you are born into the family of God you are eternally in that family. You cannot undo what God has done.

In this life you belong to God, or you belong to the world.

Romans 8:5-11

⁵ For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. ⁶ For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷ For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. ⁸ Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹ You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹ If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

So, ask yourself, who do you belong to?

Do you belong to the world or do you belong to God?

If you belong to God, you cannot be lost. You cannot lose your salvation. You cannot blaspheme the Holy Spirit.

You can grieve the Holy Spirit, by allowing sin to exist in your life. You can hurt God by disobeying his Word, by walking in the ways of this world when you know that you should not.

You can quench the Holy Spirit, by suppressing your faith, by hiding it from others, by refusing to embrace your Savior and share him with the world around you.

However, you cannot lose your salvation.

If you are truly saved, if you are truly one of God's sheep, you will also find it harder and harder to grieve and quench the Holy Spirit in your life as you walk with God in this world.

The instant you become one of his sheep, that process of sanctification starts and continues until the day that you are glorified upon your death. You are sealed by the Holy Spirit at your baptism until the day of redemption and nothing can take that away from you whether you feel it or know it or not.

When you are one of his sheep, you become separate from this world, you belong to the family of God and no longer belong to this world.

Ephesians 4:17-32

¹⁷ Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. ²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵ Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ²⁶ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil. ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

So, I hope and pray that you examine yourself, that you bow down to the Lord in your life and bring your sinful nature to him, that you repent and turn away from your old self. That you are baptized by the Holy Spirit, regenerated and reborn into God's family, that you find assurance of your salvation, and that you walk as the Salt and Light of his world, bringing the Word of God into the lives of everyone around you in the way that you live each and every day.

Let us Pray,

For Love of God and His Laws

O most gracious God,
 every good and perfect gift comes from you.
 Work in us both to will and to act according to your will.
 Enlighten our minds that we may know you,
 and let us not be unfruitful in that knowledge.
 Lord, work in our hearts a true faith,
 a purifying hope, and an unfeigned love towards you.
 Give us a full trust in you, zeal for you,
 reverence of all things that relate to you.
 Make us fearful of offending you,
 thankful for your mercies,
 humble under your corrections,
 devout in your service,
 and sorrowful for our sins.
 Grant that in all things
 we may behave ourselves so as befits a creature to his Creator,
 a servant to his Lord.
 Make us diligent in all our duties,
 watchful against all temptations,
 pure and temperate and moderate in your most lawful enjoyments,
 that they may never become a snare to us.
 Help us, O Lord,
 to act towards our neighbor
 that we may never transgress your royal law
 of loving him as ourselves.
 Finally, O Lord,
 sanctify us throughout,
 that our whole spirit, soul, and body,
 may be preserved blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;
 to whom with you and the Holy Spirit
 be all honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

Source: Thomas à Kempis

Hymn #291: "Thou Whose Almighty Word" (V 1,2,4)

Thou whose almighty word
 chaos and darkness heard
 and took their flight,
 hear us, we humbly pray,
 and where the gospel day
 sheds not its glorious ray
 Let There Be Light!

Saviour who came to bring
 on thy redeeming wing
 healing and sight,
 health to the sick in mind,
 sight to the inly blind,
 now to all humankind
 Let There Be Light!

Blessed and holy Three,
 glorious Trinity,
 Wisdom, Love, Might,
 boundless as ocean's tide
 rolling in fullest pride,
 through the world, far and wide,
 Let There Be Light!

Invitation to Offering

Offering Prayer

Closing Hymn #313: "O Worship the King" (V 1,2,5)

Oh worship the King, all glorious above;
 oh gratefully sing God's power and God's love,
 our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
 pavilioned in splendour and girded with praise.

Oh tell of God's might, oh sing of God's grace,
 whose robe is the light, whose canopy space;
 whose chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
 and dark is God's path on the wings of the storm.

O measureless Might, unchangeable Love,
 while angels delight to hymn thee above,
 thy ransomed creation, in glory ablaze,
 in true adoration shall sing to thy praise.

Pastoral Prayer

Eternal God,
whom our words may cradle but never contain,
we thank you for all the sound and silence
and color and symbol
that, through the centuries, have helped
the worship of your church
to be relevant and real.

Today we pause to remember those
who helped us to come to faith,
by singing us songs or telling us stories,
by inviting us in when we felt distant,
by praying for us without being asked.

We pause to remember the preachers, the readers,
the musicians, the leaders,
whose sensitivity and skill
have helped us to grow in faith
and to enjoy praising and worshipping you.

We remember all those
who encourage people to praise you
outside the sanctuary:
those who teach young children,
those who lead youth groups,
those who take prayers in hospitals,
in schools,
in prisons.

We remember people who cannot pray
and who struggle to believe,
or who fear changes in the church
more than in any other area of their lives.
We pray that they might be encouraged,
and that love might dispel fear.

And Father, let us pray for the renewal of your church,
beginning with ourselves.

Reshape us, good Lord,
until in generosity,
in faith,
and in expectation
that the best is yet to come,
we are truly Christlike.

Make us passionate followers of Jesus
rather than passive supporters.

Make our church community one of radical discipline
and a signpost that points to heaven;
then, in us, through us,
and—if need be—despite us,
let your kingdom come.

We pray this in the mighty name of
Jesus Christ our Lord,
Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit
As the One True Living God,
Now and forevermore,
Amen.

Benediction

May the God of hope
fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit
and go forth and share the word of God with this world he so dearly loves.
Amen.