

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Late Elementary · Parent Edition

For the parent: Read each part aloud and work through the questions together. Your answers are printed in blue italics, so no preparation is needed. Your child uses the Student Edition.

Step 1 Understand the Collect

A collect is a short prayer the pastor prays for the whole church. Here is today's collect:

Almighty and everlasting God, mercifully look upon our infirmities and stretch forth the hand of Your majesty to heal and defend us; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Words to know. *Infirmities:* weaknesses and sicknesses. *Majesty:* the greatness and power of a king. *Stretch forth:* reach out. *Leper* (in the Gospel): a person with a skin disease that kept him away from other people. *Centurion:* a Roman officer over one hundred soldiers. *Marveled:* was amazed.

1. We ask God to look upon our _____.
Answer: Infirmities.
2. We ask Him to stretch forth the _____ of His majesty.
Answer: Hand.
3. We ask God to heal and _____ us.
Answer: Defend.

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Matthew 8:1-13

1 When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. **2** And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." **3** And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. **4** And Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them."

5 When he had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, **6** "Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly." **7** And he said to him, "I will come and heal him." **8** But the centurion replied, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. **9** For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." **10** When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. **11** I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, **12** while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." **13** And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed at that very moment.

1. What did the leper say to Jesus?
Answer: "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean" (verse 2).
2. What did Jesus do?
Answer: He stretched out His hand, touched him, and said, "I will; be clean" (verse 3).

3. Who asked Jesus to heal his servant?

Answer: *A centurion, a Roman officer (verses 5-6).*

4. What did the centurion say Jesus needed to do?

Answer: *Only say the word (verse 8).*

Step 3 Find the Collect in the Gospel

Say to your child: Our prayer asks God to reach out His hand to help us when we are weak. In the Gospel, Jesus reaches out His hand to a sick man. Let's find our prayer in the story.

1. The collect asks God to *stretch forth the hand of Your majesty*. Read verse 3. What did Jesus do with His hand?

Answer: *He stretched it out and touched the leper.*

2. The collect asks God to look upon our *infirmities*. Who in the story was sick?

Answer: *The leper and the centurion's paralyzed servant.*

3. The collect asks God to *help* us. How did Jesus help the servant without going to the house?

Answer: *He spoke the word, and the servant was healed at that very moment (verse 13).*

Parent note. No one touched lepers. Jesus did, and instead of Jesus becoming unclean, the leper became clean. That is what Jesus does with our sin: He takes it on Himself and gives us His cleanness.

Step 4 The Small Catechism

The Third Petition. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. **What does this mean?** The good and gracious will of God is done even without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also. **How is God's will done?** God's will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come; and when He strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith until we die. This is His good and gracious will.

1. The leper said, "If you will." Which petition of the Lord's Prayer asks for God's will?

Answer: *The Third Petition: "Thy will be done."*

2. What was Jesus' will for the leper?

Answer: *"I will; be clean." God's will is good and gracious.*

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

Pray today's collect together one more time. Then ask:

1. What does Jesus do for you when you are weak or sick?

Answer: *He reaches out to help me. He hears my prayers, His will for me is always good, and He makes me clean from my sins.*