

OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH · FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Middle School · Student Edition

For the student: Read along, fill in the blanks, and write your answers on the lines. Your parent has the answers.

Step 1 Understand the Collect

Most collects follow a five-part pattern: the **address** (the One to whom we pray), the **reason** (what God has done or promised), the **petition** (what we ask), the **purpose** (what we hope will result), and the **ending** (the closing that names the Trinity).

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.

1. Mark each part of the collect. Which part is missing?

2. The collect asks for "the hand of Your majesty," the hand of the King of all. How does the Gospel make that picture literal?

3. The collect asks God to "heal and defend" us. What does each word cover?

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Read the Gospel on your own.

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. The leper said, "If you will, you can make me clean" (v. 2). What does that show about his faith?

2. Why did Jesus tell him to show himself to the priest (v. 4)?

3. The centurion was a Gentile soldier. Why did he say, "I am not worthy to have you come under my roof" (v. 8)?

4. What did Jesus mean when He said many will come "from east and west" (v. 11)?

Step 3 Find the Collect in the Gospel

1. Find at least two places where the collect's words appear in the Gospel. Explain each one.

2. In 2 Kings 5, Naaman, a Gentile army commander, is healed of leprosy by God's word through the prophet Elisha. How does that story mirror both healings in Matthew 8?

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.

Cross-reference. "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." (Luke 22:42)

1. Luther says God's "good and gracious will" is done "even without our prayer." How does the leper's prayer fit that?

2. Is it wrong to say "if it is Your will" when we pray for healing?

3. Luther says God's will is done when He "strengthens and keeps us firm in His Word and faith." How did the centurion show firm faith in Jesus' Word?

Think about it. How can you know God wants to help you? Read Matthew 8:3 and Romans 8:32 and be ready to talk about it.

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

1. Write a short collect of your own for this day. Use all five parts.

Pray today's collect together. Then answer:

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