

OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH · FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

The Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

Middle School · 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

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 merciful God, of Your bountiful goodness keep from us all things that may hurt us that we, being ready in both body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish whatever You would have us do; 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. Are any parts missing?

***Answer:** Address: "Almighty and merciful God." Reason: "of Your bountiful goodness," a short phrase rather than a full clause. Petition: "keep from us all things that may hurt us." Purpose: "that we, being ready in both body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish whatever You would have us do." Ending: "through Jesus Christ..." All five parts are present, though the reason is brief.*

2. The collect asks God to keep harm from us so that we can serve Him. What does that order teach?

***Answer:** God's gifts come first and our service follows. We do not earn His protection by serving; He protects and restores us so that we are free to serve.*

3. Why does the collect say "body and soul" instead of only one?

***Answer:** God made and redeems the whole person. Sin harms both, and Christ heals both, as He does in this Gospel.*

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Read the Gospel on your own.

Matthew 9:1-8

1 And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. **2** And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." **3** And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." **4** But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? **5** For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? **6** But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home." **7** And he rose and went home. **8** When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

1. Jesus saw "their faith" (v. 2). Whose faith, and how did it show?

***Answer:** The faith of the men who carried their friend, and presumably his own. Faith showed itself by bringing him to Jesus.*

2. The man came to be healed. Why did Jesus forgive his sins first?

***Answer:** Sin was his deeper need. Sickness is part of living in a fallen world; forgiveness restores him to God, which is the greater gift.*

3. The scribes said, "This man is blaspheming." Were they right that only God can forgive sins? What did they miss?

Answer: They were right that only God forgives sins. They missed that Jesus is God, the Son of Man with authority on earth to forgive.

4. Which is easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven" or "Rise and walk" (v. 5)? Why does Jesus heal the man?

Answer: "Your sins are forgiven" is easier to say because no one can see whether it happened. Jesus heals the man so that everyone will know His unseen word of forgiveness is real.

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.

Answer: "Keep from us all things that may hurt us" matches the paralysis and the sin that held the man (v. 2). "Ready in both body and soul" matches forgiveness for his soul (v. 2) and healing for his body (v. 6). "Cheerfully accomplish whatever You would have us do" matches "he rose and went home" (v. 7). "Bountiful goodness" matches the crowds glorifying God (v. 8). Any two, well explained, are enough.

2. Today's Epistle tells us "to put off your old self" and "to put on the new self" (Ephesians 4:22, 24). How does the healed man picture that?

Answer: He leaves his old life on the bed, forgiven and healed, and rises to walk in a new one. Forgiveness comes first, and the new life follows.

Step 4 The Small Catechism

The Office of the Keys. What is the Office of the Keys? The Office of the Keys is that special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant as long as they do not repent. **Where is this written?** This is what St. John the Evangelist writes in chapter twenty: The Lord Jesus breathed on His disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (John 20:22-23) **What do you believe according to these words?** I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by His divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain, in heaven also, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself.

Cross-reference. "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation... Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us." (2 Corinthians 5:18, 20)

1. The crowds glorified God "who had given such authority to men" (v. 8). According to the catechism, who exercises that authority among us today?

Answer: Christ gave it to His Church, and the called ministers of Christ exercise it publicly by His command.

2. Why is the absolution the pastor speaks "just as valid and certain... as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself"?

Answer: The pastor speaks by Christ's command and in His place, as an ambassador (2 Corinthians 5:20). The forgiveness is Christ's, not the pastor's own.

3. The Keys also withhold forgiveness from those who will not repent. Why is that loving?

Answer: It warns the sinner while there is still time to repent. The goal is always to bring the person back and forgive him.

Parent note: the question they may ask. "Only God can forgive sins. How can a pastor do it?" The scribes asked the same question. They were right that only God forgives. The point of this Gospel is that God chose to give that authority to men. The pastor does not

forgive by his own power. He speaks Christ's forgiveness by Christ's command, and Christ stands behind the word.

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

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

Answer: *Answers will vary. Example: "Almighty God, Your Son forgave the paralyzed man and raised him from his bed. Forgive us and heal us, that we may rise and gladly do Your will; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen."*

Pray today's collect together. Then answer:

2. What does Jesus do for you when the pastor says, "I forgive you all your sins"?

Answer: *Jesus Himself forgives me. My sins are gone, as surely as the paralyzed man's were.*