

## FRIDAY

“*HOW CAN WE BLAME ANOTHER?*”

### SCRIPTURE:

Romans 5:6-11, I John 4:9-11;  
Leviticus 6:24-27; 7:1-5

This is perhaps the only generation which has demanded perfection from its parents, society and institutions on pain of total rejection. Yet has any generation in history ever known the perfect parent, ideal society or flawless institution? Other generations have taken for granted the natural imperfection of human nature and adjusted, knowing that they themselves are not perfect. God knew this, too.

This is why — while He tells us to “love our neighbors as ourselves” — He also says, “You cannot maintain perfection even in this effort; eventually you will fail in some way because you *are* human. I will give you a way of salvation, though — a way of forgiveness so that you need not carry around the guilt of your imperfection.”

Unforgiven guilt has no place in the productive life. It is one of the most destructive forces on earth; it continuously seeks to rationalize by overcompensating until our reasons for doing good become twisted and selfish — *frantic efforts to absolve ourselves rather than minister to others.*

So it is not enough to reject a society that is imperfect: how then do we deal with our own imperfection? It is not enough to rebel against parents; too soon we will taste the wrath of our own children. What, then . . . ?

We walk in humility, remembering the love Christ had for us while we were *yet* imperfect — and *this* is the compassion and love we pass on to others.

*Prayer: God, it is so much easier to judge than to forgive, so much easier to blame than to bind up! Give us the grace to see ourselves as human souls who need Thy love to cover us all. AMEN*

## SATURDAY

“*NOT WHAT WE DO,  
BUT HOW WE DO IT*”

### SCRIPTURE:

Genesis 4:1-16; John 1:29; 3:16-18

As we read this passage, we cannot help but respond to Cain’s bewildered anger: both brothers had offered the best of their own efforts — Abel’s was accepted while Cain’s was rejected. Why shouldn’t he have been angry?

It is easy to lose the meaning of this incident. Remember that the two brothers were not offering a mere gift; this was the first effort toward sacrificial atonement mentioned in Scripture. These brothers were groping their way back to the kind of communion with God that their parents had once known. They were seeking the pattern of forgiveness, so it was essential that God begin to instruct them in what would and would not be effective in a forgiveness experience. The secret was not in the gift — but in the attitude of heart and what change resulted in the life of the man.

As Abel took the life of his innocent lamb, he must have been shaken by the fact that this precious life was being offered for something his family had done. He would never again be the same. Cain, on the other hand, in bringing his field produce, the work of his own hands, probably felt only pride and pleasure. So the two sacrifices had far different effects on the two hearts. Which was the more revealing, the more apt to lead to a change of attitude and heart?

A sacrifice should be such an unforgettable experience that we are never quite the same arrogant people again, but wiser, more grateful and forgiving.

*Prayer: God, when we try to work out our own forgiveness, all we feel is pride. But when we finally realize that sin always results in the death of innocence, when we see what our sins have cost You, then we know repentance and full surrender and commitment AMEN*

## MONDAY, MAY 31, 2021

“*THE FATHER SHALL NOT SUFFER FOR  
THE SINS OF THE SON*”

### SCRIPTURE

Ezekiel 18:1-20; Hebrews 10:11-18

Today’s generation is suffering under a load of mass guilt such as this world has never seen

— parents in agony in the belief that they are responsible for their children’s rebellion . . . young people struggling against the decay of their world . . . a society burdened with the foulness of millions of individual lives . . .

And on the other side of the coin is the hostility which this brings: “If I am guilty for my child, *my* parents are guilty for me. If our society is guilty for today’s problems, yesterday’s society is guilty for what I am!”

*So we seek absolution by blaming others rather than seeking forgiveness from God for our own sins.* What an insidious effect this has on God’s ability to help us. How it blinds us to the meaning of our Lord’s sacrifice . . .

Yet God anticipated this tendency of ours for He specifically warns: “All souls are *mine* — and the soul that sins shall die . . . his blood shall be upon himself.” This puts the blame squarely upon each individual, each nation, each society as it stands before God.

But wait. What was it Christ came to do? Read Hebrews 10 for the full implications of His life; for we as Christians now stand before God with only our own sins and the promise of Christ’s forgiveness. No more guilt or hostility toward others. Think what this could mean to our world!

*Prayer: Dear God, teach us that blaming others does not heal or bring forgiveness; neither does taking on another’s guilt absolve him. O God, give us the strength to admit our guilt before Thee and be healed. AMEN*

## TUESDAY

### “THE MILLSTONE OF OUR OWN GUILT”

#### SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 18:1-6; Ezekiel 18:2-4; 10-13

Only a parent who has known the full impact of failure can possibly understand the truth of this passage! “It would be better for him if a millstone had been hung around his neck and he be drowned in the deepest sea.” Is this a threat of judgment or punish from God? Probably not. A parent who has finally come to the realization of his part in his child’s demise can almost wish he *could* be drowned — anything as penance or oblivion from the relentless sorrow and helplessness he feels as he must live with the consequences of his failure as a parent.

Today, however, we make the mistake of thinking that if we feel sufficiently guilty as parents, this in some way minimizes our children’s guilt, “gets them off the hook with God —.” But it isn’t so. God said, “His blood shall be upon himself —” and this makes it even worse! The terrible fact is that once we have allowed (or been the cause of) our children’s sin, there is nothing we can do except pray that God in His mercy will bring that child to the place of forgiveness, that Christ will take our guilt.

This is the curse — our own helplessness, not the judgment of God. And this is why Christ is so essential in the pattern of parent-child-guilt- sin complex! Only as we face such grief, can we reach out for our Lord’s gift of redemption and forgiveness.

*Prayer: Lord, only those who have given Thee their failures can know complete release, even from such sorrow as that of insufficiency or godlessness as parents. God, we thank Thee that You can bring this double forgiveness to us — without it, we could not go on. AMEN*

## WEDNESDAY

### “TO WHICH KINGDOM DO YOU BELONG?”

#### SCRIPTURE:

Joshua 24:14, 15; John 8:43-47  
Zechariah 3:1-4

How can we distinguish the kingdom of God from the kingdom of Satan and of This World?

Christ rules through love, truth and obedience to God.

Satan rules through lust, distortion and rebellion against God.

Christ woos man to the surrender of his soul to God.

Satan dares man to be master of his own soul.

Christ places Self in the hands of God so that Self can be lifted beyond its own power into the presence of God.

Satan puts Self on the throne and man never rises farther than his own physical and intellectual endeavors.

Jesus Christ transforms the heart of man, stimulating and enhancing an inner growth which never ceases.

Satan solidifies the heart of man until man is incapable of giving himself freely to either God or man and his inner soul becomes glutted, soured, poisonous and bloated until the spirit is no longer able to sustain life. This leads to a spiritual death of which Christ warns.

Which kingdom is yours . . . ?

*Prayer: Lord, yielding my will is the hardest thing I have ever done. Yet, God, help me see that Thy love for me is so perfect that only good can come to me if I yield to Thee. Only as You shape and mold my life, can I be the person You created me to be. Lord, help me to trust Thee more. AMEN*

## THURSDAY

### “BEWARE THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES”

#### SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 16:5-12; Exodus 12:14-20

Leaven, like yeast, made bread rise by its fermenting action. It was a symbol of impurity to the Hebrew people, and therefore the bread they utilized for religious purposes was always the unleavened bread.

Jesus is using this example to show that the clever, deceptive word of the Pharisees was like leaven: it could be put into people’s heart and they would not know it was there until it began to ferment and multiply itself.

Read this Scripture several times. Does any of it seem familiar, or pertinent today?

Today Satan is working exactly as he did in Jesus’ time — through subtle deceptions and false doctrines which work silently in the very midst of Christ’s Church. So often we are un- aware of the danger until we begin to experience the fermentation and heat aroused by such treachery.

Are you able to tell the difference between truth and half-truth? Can you discern the distortion of a false doctrine? Only by reading the Word of God, by measuring all things by His Son, and by constant prayer, can any of us hope to obey Christ’s warning to His disciples.

*Prayer: Lord, help me to keep my eyes upon Thee alone, so that no man may ever succeed in leading me astray. I would be faithful to Thee, God, and I pray that Thou wilt keep me from indifference or betrayal to Thee. AMEN*