

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans:

Hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Spirit that has been given to us. For Christ, while we were still helpless, yet died at the appointed time for the ungodly.

Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his great love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. How much more then, since we are now justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath.

Indeed, if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, how much more, once reconciled will we be saved by his life. Not only that, but we also boast of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

The Word of the Lord.

Where sin increased, there grace abounded all the more

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans:

If, by the transgression of one person, death came to reign through that one, how much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of justification come to reign in life through the one person Jesus Christ.

Just as through one transgression condemnation came upon all, so through one righteous act acquittal and life came to all.

For just as through the disobedience of one, the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one, the many will be made righteous.

The law entered in so that transgression might increase but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans:

Are you not aware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.

For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection.

We know that our old self was crucified with him, so that our sinful body might be done away with, that we might no longer be in slavery to sin.

For a dead person has been absolved from sin. If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans:

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of adoption, through which we cry, "Abba, Father!"

The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if only we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God.

We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans:

If God is for us, who can be against us? Is it possible that God, who did not spare his own Son, but handed him over for the sake of us all, how will he not give us everything else along with him?

Who will bring a charge against God's chosen ones? It is God who acquits us. Who will condemn? It is Christ [Jesus] who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword?

No, in all this we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans:

None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written:

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bend before me and every tongue shall give praise to God."

So then each of us shall give an account of ourselves before God.

The Word of the Lord.

All people will be brought to life in Christ

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians:

Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead came also through a human being.

For just as in Adam all die, so too in Christ shall all be brought to life, but each one in proper order: Christ the firstfruits; then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

Death is swallowed up in victory

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians:

Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For that which is corruptible must clothe itself with incorruptibility, and that which is mortal must clothe itself with immortality. And when this which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility and this which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about:

**"Death is swallowed up in victory.
Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?"**

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Word of the Lord.

What is seen is transitory; what is unseen is eternal

A reading from the second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians:

We know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance on more and more people may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God.

Therefore, we are not discouraged; rather, although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this momentary light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to what is seen but to what is unseen; for what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal.

For we know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

The Word of the Lord.

We have an everlasting home in heaven.

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

We know that if our earthly dwelling, a tent, should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

So we are always courageous, although we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from God, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yet we are courageous, and we would rather leave the body and go home to Lord.

Therefore, we aspire to please him, whether we are at home or away. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that we may receive recompense, according to our life in the body, whether good or evil.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians:

That is why I kneel before the God from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to accomplish far more than all we ask or imagine, by the power at work with in us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

Jesus will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours to be like his glorious body

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians:

Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we also await a savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will change our lowly body to conform with his glorified body by the power that enables him also to bring all things into subjection to himself.

The Word of the Lord.

We shall stay with the Lord for ever

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians:

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

Indeed, we tell you this, on the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will surely not precede those who have fallen asleep.

For the Lord himself, with a word of command, with the voice of an archangel and with the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore, console one another with these words.

The Word of the Lord.

If we have died with him, we shall live with him

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy:

Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, a descendant of David: such is my gospel, for which I am suffering, even to the point of chains, like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained.

Therefore, I bear with everything for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, together with eternal glory. This saying is trustworthy:

If we have died with him we shall also live with him;

If we persevere we shall also reign with him.

But if we deny him he will deny us.

If we are unfaithful he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself.

The Word of the Lord.

I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race

A reading from the second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy:

I for my part am already being poured out like a libation. The time of my dissolution is near. I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith.

From now on a merited crown awaits me; on that Day the Lord, just judge that he is, will award it to me-and not only to me, but to all who have looked for his appearing with eager longing.

But the Lord Jesus stood by my side and gave me strength, so that through me the preaching task might be completed and all the nations might hear the gospel. That is how I was saved from the lion's jaw. The Lord Jesus will continue to rescue me from all attempts to do me harm and will bring me safe to the heavenly kingdom. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

We shall see God as he really is

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John:

See what love God has bestowed on us in letting us be called children of God! Yet that in fact is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Dearly beloved, we are God's children now. What we shall be has not yet been revealed. We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

The Word of the Lord.

We have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers and sisters

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John:

We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers and sisters. Whoever does not love remains in death. Those who hate their brothers or sisters are murderers, and you know that no murderers have eternal life remaining in them.

The way we came to know love was that Jesus laid down his life for us; so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the Book of Revelation:

I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," said the Spirit, "let them find rest from their labors, for their works accompany them."

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the Book of Revelation:

I saw a large white throne and the one who was sitting on it. The earth and the sky fled from his presence and there was no place for them. I saw the dead, the great and the lowly, standing before the throne, and scrolls were opened. Then another scroll was opened, the book of life. The dead were judged according to their deeds, by what was written in the scrolls.

The sea gave up its dead; then Death and Hades gave up their dead. All the dead were judged according to their deeds. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the pool of fire. (This pool of fire is the second death.) Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the pool of fire.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

The Word of the Lord.

There will be no more death

A reading from the Book of Revelation:

I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, for the old order has passed away."

The One who sat on the throne said: "Behold, I make all things new!"

I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give a gift from the spring of life-giving water. The victors will inherit these gifts, and I shall be their God, and they shall be my people."

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the Book of Revelation:

The angel then showed me the river of life-giving water, clear as crystal, which issued from the throne of God and of the Lamb and flowed down the middle of the streets. On either side of the river grew the trees of life which produce fruit twelve times a year, once each month; their leaves serve as medicine for the nations.

Nothing deserving a curse shall be found there. The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be there, and the servants shall serve faithfully. They shall see God face to face and bear God's name on their foreheads. The night shall be no more. They will need no light from lamps or the sun, for God shall give them light, and they shall reign forever.

The angel said to me: "These words are trustworthy and true; the God of prophetic spirits, has sent this angel to show these servants what must happen very soon. Remember, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book!"

The Word of the Lord.

Your faith is more precious than the passing splendor of fire-tried gold

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Peter:

Praised be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us new birth; a birth unto hope which draws life from the imperishable inheritance, incapable of fading or defilement, which is kept in heaven for you who are guarded with God's power through faith; a birth to a salvation which stands ready to be revealed in the last days.

There is cause for rejoicing here. You may for a time have to suffer the distress of many trials; but this is so that your faith, which is more precious than the passing splendor of fire-tried gold, may by its genuineness lead to praise, glory, and honor when Jesus Christ appears. Although you have never seen him, you love him, and without seeing you now believe in him, and rejoice with inexpressible joy touched with glory because you are achieving faith's goal, your salvation.

The Word of the Lord.

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians:

Set your hearts on the greater gifts. Now I will show you the way which surpasses all the others. If I speak with human tongues and angelic as well, but do not have love, I am just a noisy gong, a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge, or if I have faith great enough to move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away everything I own to feed the poor, then hand over my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind. Love is not jealous. Love does not put on airs, and it is not snobbish; it is never rude, or self-seeking; it is not prone to anger, nor does it brood over injuries. Love does not rejoice in what is wrong, but rejoices with the truth. There is no limit to love's forbearance, to its trust, its hope, its power to endure.

There are in the end three things that last; faith, hope, and love; and the greatest of these is love.

The Word of the Lord.