

Decode the Scripture verse.

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Almighty God, we implore You, show Your mercy to Your humble servants that we, who put no trust in our own merits, may not be dealt with after the severity of Your judgment but according to Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

MONDAY — THE PSALM

Read Psalm 14

Foolishness can be defined as a denial of God (verse 1). Describe the fool who has rejected God. (verses 1–3)

Corrupt, does abominable (repulsive/foul/horrible) deeds before God, without understanding, and lacks no good within themselves

Review *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, question 21 (pages 57–57) and question 75 (page 96)

Optional Reading & Discussion Question

Psalm 102:1–13

What is the psalmist experiencing, and where does he look for help?

The psalmist is expressing his misery, sadness, and spiritual anxiety. He pleads with the Lord for help because he can see his wretchedness and the Lord's anger on account of his sins.

TUESDAY — THE OLD TESTAMENT

Read Exodus 32:1–20

What major Exodus event took place in this reading? Retell it as best as you can using your own words. Did you miss anything?

Using your own words retell the event of the Golden Calf and Moses' anger.

Optional Reading & Discussion Question

Job 14:1–6

Who is Job describing?

Job is not only talking about himself, he is talking about each of us. Our days are numbered, yet in our foolishness we don't count them correctly. Only God knows the number of our days; He has set the limit to those days, and no one can change or alter this limit. (You can not bargain with God for more time on earth.) And, so the fear of death that every person experiences is not so much a fear of pain in dying, but the pain of life slipping away.

WEDNESDAY — THE GOSPEL

Read Matthew 24:15–28

What historical event is Jesus foretelling in this lesson? Does this mean that Jesus' words, here, are no longer relevant?

The destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD.

No. The destruction of Jerusalem is but a foretaste of the wrath of God on the Last Day.

What will Jesus' second coming on the Last Day be like?

Surprising and terrifying to the unbeliever; surprising, yet eagerly awaited for by the Christian.

Review *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, question 149 (pages 142–145)

Optional Reading & Discussion Question

Luke 17:20–30

From this lesson and from the rest of Scripture, which is the more important sense for a Christian: the sense of sight or the sense of hearing?

Jesus says in verse 20, "The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed"; St. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:7, "We walk by faith, not by sight"; and also in Romans 10:17, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ" — The sense of hearing is the most important sense for a Christian.

Review *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, question 170 (page 158)

THURSDAY — THE EPISTLE

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

Listen to how a Church Father describes why St. Paul speaks of death as falling asleep.

"When a Christian dies, it is nothing other than a sleep, for which reason he must also emerge from sleep and live, as Christ lives. For since the debt of sin is removed, the punishment of sin, which is death, is removed also. And in short, it is our glory and consolation as Christians that we will not simply fall asleep and rise again, but we will also be taken with Christ to eternal life. But our dying and falling asleep must take place in the knowledge of faith and God's truth, or nothing will come of it. If I depart this world in the knowledge of God's Word, I fall asleep in Christ. Then Christ will take me up on His divine back and bring me to the heavenly inn. But if a tyrant, an enemy of God's truth, a persecutor of the Gospel, an ungodly and evil [person] dies, he does not fall asleep in Christ, for which reason Christ does not take him with Him, but hands him over to his god of lies, the devil, whom he trusted, believed, followed, and served." (Spangenberg, *The Christian Year of Grace*. pg. 360).

Review *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, question 187 (pages 168–169)

CATECHISM CONNECTION

What is the connection of the First Commandment with Explanation and the Third to the Last Sunday of the Church Year?

A person's entire fear, love, and trust, indeed his complete confidence, must be in God alone and in nothing or no one else. God alone numbers our days, He is the Lord of all creation, and He will not share the glory due His name with any other god.