

Scripture Lessons for 🕯️🕯️🕯️ the Third Midweek in Advent

Old Testament

Isaiah 55:6-11 Seek the LORD while He may be found; call on Him while He is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon. 8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 9 "As the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. 10 As the rain and the snow come down from Heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, 11 so is My Word that goes out from My Mouth: It will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

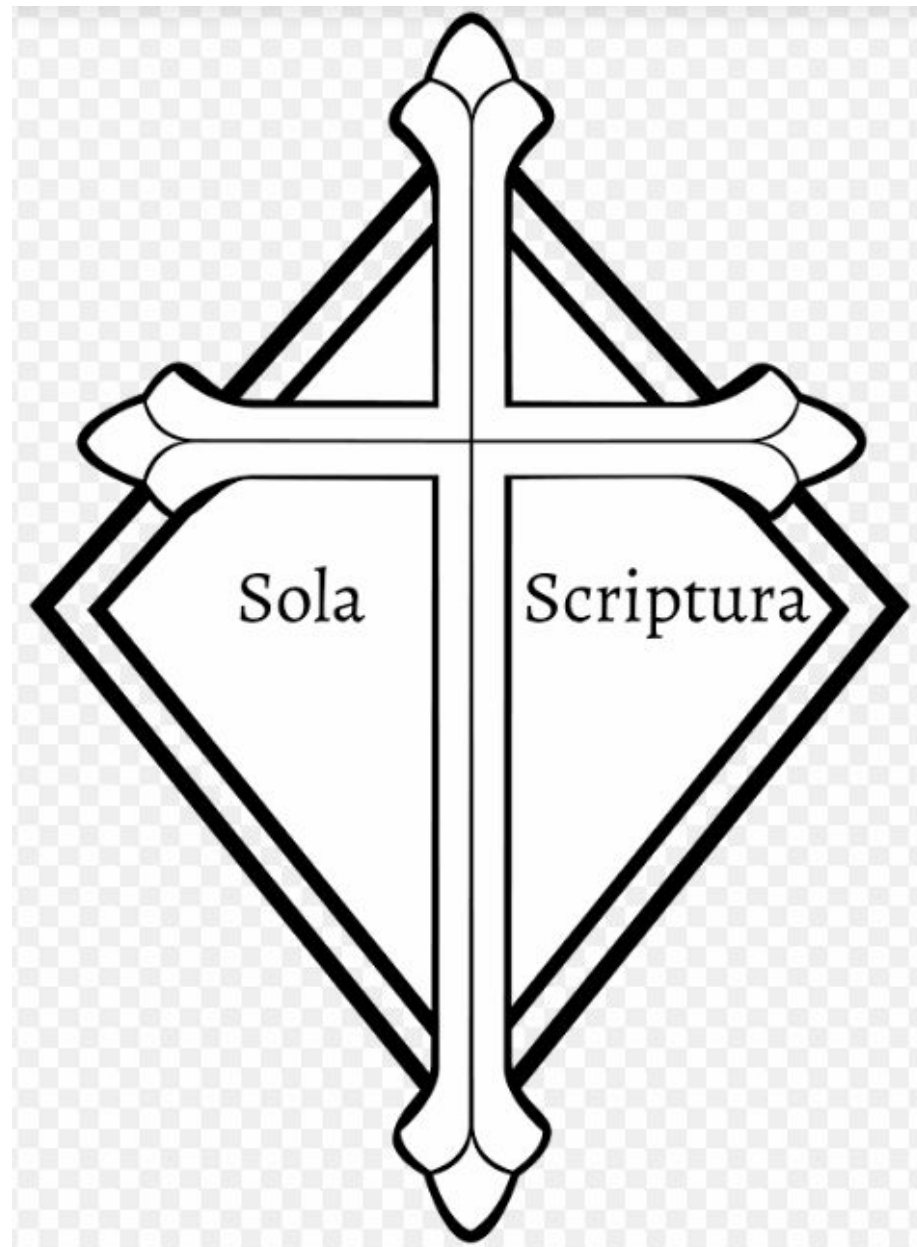
Epistle

2 Timothy 3:10-17 You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, 11 persecutions, sufferings - what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. 12 In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, 13 while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Gospel

John 6:60-69 On hearing it, many of His disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" 61 Aware that His disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? 62 What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where He was before! 63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The Words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. 64 Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray Him. 65 He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to Me unless the Father has enabled him." 66 From this time many of His disciples turned back and no longer followed Him. 67 "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. 68 Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the Words of eternal life. 69 We believe and know that You are the Holy One of God."

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL  ELS
3rd Midweek in Advent 🕯️🕯️🕯️ *Sola Scriptura* "Scripture Alone"
Advent Solas ✠ December 14th, 2016, 4:30 pm



Historic Church Year Symbol Set for **Advent-3 Midweek– Scripture Alone**

Image courtesy of the Lutheran Synod Publishing <https://lutheransynodpublishing.com>

ADVENT-3 MIDWEEK ADVENT SOLAS: "3. SOLA SCRIPTURA" 12.14.16 OSL

PRAYER *Everlasting God, Who, by the mouths of Your prophets and saints of old, proclaimed the advent of Your Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Desire of all nations, the Hope of Israel, the Redeemer of the world: Lead us to repent of all our sins, and so to humble ourselves that we may be prepared to receive Him with gladness and to join in singing: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord! Amen.*

Seek the Lord while He may be found; call on Him while He is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon. 8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways," declares the Lord. 9 "As the Heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts. 10 As the rain and the snow come down from Heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, 11 so is My Word that goes out from My Mouth: It will not return to Me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:6-11)

Scripture alone is sufficient for the knowledge of the Truth. Here in this text we are also reminded that Scripture is God's Word, not ours. This means that it may contain things that are difficult for us to understand or logically make sense according to our way of thinking. This is as it says because God's thoughts are not ours. His thoughts are higher than ours. This can be troubling as we are confused or irritated at situations that come up in life. In these times we must realize that God's Word is also efficacious, powerful to do what God wants it to do.

God's Word has power in all situations of your life because God Himself says so. God's Word makes your Baptism a washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. God's Word stands behind every absolution you hear. God's Word is the basis for the Lord's Supper, where it teaches not only what we receive but why we need it in our lives. God's Word is the cause of your having faith in Christ Jesus. Scripture alone reveals the Gospel to you which is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe it (Romans 1).

Scripture alone has the power of God behind it to create and sustain faith in Christ. That is the purpose for which God sent it. It shall succeed in the thing for which He sent it.

"The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men." (Acts 17:10-12)

The Bereans receive special notice in the Scriptures. As such, "being a good Berean" is a good compliment to any Christian. This is because of how the Bereans received the preached words of the Apostle Paul with eagerness and

also examining them against what the Scriptures taught each and every day. The result from this use of God's Word is that many of them believed.

This is one of the ways how the Christian can and should make use of the Word of God. When eagerly hearing preaching, to review what is heard with what Scripture says. When reading a "Christian book" to review what it says with what Scripture says. When using a devotion like this, examining what is said and comparing it to what Scripture says. When we hear others talk about God or spirituality, using Scripture to tell what is true and what is false. This is because Scripture alone is the source of true doctrine.

The Bereans received the preaching of Paul eagerly because he had shown himself to teach in accord with the Scriptures. This is also why we as Christians can receive the teachings of the Small Catechism or Book of Concord eagerly as well. Their teachings are in accord with Scripture. They can receive with joy because they too confess the same truth that Scripture confesses. The same can be said for faithful sermons that you hear from the pulpit. Scripture is the basis and judge, but these other things can bring the truth of Scripture to us as well.

"And He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into His glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." (Luke 24:25-27)

When Jesus wants to teach others about Himself, He goes to the Scriptures. This alone should tell us how to regard the Scriptures. Here, in the wake of Easter Jesus teaches two of His disciples on the road while they walked. Those disciples had become confused. They let other teachings confound their mind about the purpose of the Christ. They had taken some popular worldly notions of success and kingdom-building and put them into their doctrine, their beliefs. Their actions followed their beliefs. They were saddened and shocked by the news coming out of Jerusalem of Christ's crucifixion. Jesus corrected them by pointing them back to God's Word — Sola Scriptura.

Jesus uses Moses and the Prophets (the Old Testament) to show how He had to suffer and die. The Glory of God is indeed different than the glory of man. And the point and purpose of the Scriptures is also shown in this passage. Jesus uses Scripture to teach about Himself and the ways of God — the ways of a suffering Christ and a saved people. He also teaches faith by rebuke their slowness of heart to believe what the Word of God said.

We often fail to let God's Word shape our minds and how we think about things. In troubling times we often get the idea that God has left us (like those disciples in unbelief after the Christ had been killed). But God works in different ways than the world does. Christ's kingdom is not of this world. He doesn't rule as an earthly ruler does. He rules by serving. He rules by suffering. And He has said to us in His Word that we may suffer as well. The life of the Christian may not be filled with all sorts of earthly comfort. There will be trials and tribulations, but be of good cheer, for Christ has overcome the world (John 16). He overcame it by suffering, just as Scripture said He would. **IJ'N, Amen. SDG**