

Prayer for Inspiration

Open our ears, Lord God, to hear Your voice speaking to us from the Scripture today. Help us not necessarily to interpret the Bible in a way that makes us feel good, or that gives us easy answers, or that reinforces just what we want to believe. Rather, help us to give You continual, constant permission to interrupt and rearrange our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

First Reading: Psalm 37:1-13

Of David.

1 Do not fret because of those who are evil

or be envious of those who do wrong;

2 for like the grass they will soon wither,

like green plants they will soon die away.

3 Trust in the Lord and do good;

dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

4 Take delight in the Lord,

and he will give you the desires of your heart.

5 Commit your way to the Lord;

trust in him and he will do this:

6 He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,

your vindication like the noonday sun.

7 Be still before the Lord

and wait patiently for him;

do not fret when people succeed in their ways,

when they carry out their wicked schemes.

8 Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;

do not fret—it leads only to evil.

9 For those who are evil will be destroyed,

but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.

**10 A little while, and the wicked will be no more;
though you look for them, they will not be found.**

**11 But the meek will inherit the land
and enjoy peace and prosperity.**

**12 The wicked plot against the righteous
and gnash their teeth at them;**

**13 but the Lord laughs at the wicked,
for he knows their day is coming**

Second Reading: Matthew 13:3-9; 18-30; 37-43

**³ Then he told them many things in parables, saying:
“A farmer went out to sow his seed. ⁴ As he was
scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the
birds came and ate it up. ⁵ Some fell on rocky places,**

where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. ⁶ But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. ⁷ Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. ⁸ Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. ⁹ Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

¹⁸ “Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in their heart. This is the seed sown along the path. ²⁰ The

seed falling on rocky ground refers to someone who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹ But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. ²² The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful. ²³ But the seed falling on good soil refers to someone who hears the word and understands it. This is the one who produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

The Parable of the Weeds

²⁴ Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.

²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.

²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

²⁷ “The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’

²⁸ ““An enemy did this,’ he replied.

“The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’

²⁹ “‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them.

³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’”

³⁷ He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

⁴⁰ “As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.