

LORD, you are full of com - pas - sion and mer - cy,  
of com - pas - sion and mer - cy.

[Bless the LORD, <sup>1</sup>O my soul,  
and all that is within me, bless God's <sup>1</sup>holy name.

<sup>2</sup>Bless the LORD, <sup>1</sup>O my soul,  
and forget not <sup>1</sup>all God's benefits—

<sup>3</sup>who forgives <sup>1</sup>all your sins  
and heals all <sup>1</sup>your diseases;

<sup>4</sup>who redeems your life <sup>1</sup>from the grave  
and crowns you with steadfast <sup>1</sup>love and mercy; **R**

<sup>5</sup>who satisfies your desires <sup>1</sup>with good things  
so that your youth is renewed <sup>1</sup>like an eagle's.

<sup>6</sup>O LORD, you provide <sup>1</sup>vindication  
and justice for all who <sup>1</sup>are oppressed.

<sup>7</sup>You made known your <sup>1</sup>ways to Moses  
and your works to the chil- <sup>1</sup>dren of Israel.]

<sup>8</sup>LORD, you are full of compas- <sup>1</sup>sion and mercy,  
slow to anger and abounding in <sup>1</sup>steadfast love; **R**

<sup>9</sup>you will not al- <sup>1</sup>ways accuse us,  
nor will you keep your an- <sup>1</sup>ger forever.

<sup>10</sup>You have not dealt with us according <sup>1</sup>to our sins,  
nor repaid us according to <sup>1</sup>our iniquities.

<sup>11</sup>For as the heavens are high a- <sup>1</sup>bove the earth,  
so great is your steadfast love for <sup>1</sup>those who fear you.

<sup>12</sup>As far as the east is <sup>1</sup>from the west,  
so far have you removed our transgres- <sup>1</sup>sions from us.

<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion <sup>1</sup>for his children,  
so you have compassion for those who fear <sup>1</sup>you, O LORD. **R**

*This Christian community has significant struggles with diversity. Here Paul helps us understand that despite different practices in worship and personal piety, we do not judge one another. All Christians belong to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for all of us and will judge each of us.*

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. <sup>2</sup>Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

<sup>5</sup>Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. <sup>6</sup>Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

<sup>7</sup>We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. <sup>8</sup>If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. <sup>9</sup>For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

<sup>10</sup>Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

<sup>11</sup>For it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,  
and every tongue shall give praise to God.”

<sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

## Gospel

## Matthew 18:21-35

*When Peter asks about the limits of forgiveness, Jesus responds with a parable that suggests human forgiveness should mirror the unlimited mercy of God.*

Peter came and said to [Jesus,] “Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?” <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

<sup>23</sup>“For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. <sup>24</sup>When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; <sup>25</sup>and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. <sup>26</sup>So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’ <sup>27</sup>And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. <sup>28</sup>But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow

slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, ‘Pay what you owe.’ <sup>29</sup>Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ <sup>30</sup>But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. <sup>31</sup>When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. <sup>32</sup>Then his lord summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. <sup>35</sup>So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”