

Watching Daily At My Gates

April 15 Read [John 5:1-9](#)

Once again we have another miracle of our Lord. There is some discussion about the place of this incident in the canon of Scripture. I believe that the Holy Spirit led the church to accept its authenticity for the church of all ages. Notice Jesus' directness in verses 6-8. He asks a question, receives an answer, and performs the miracles. There is no pleading on either the man's part or on Jesus'. Jesus has compassion on the man and heals him. The man hears the voice of Christ and obeys and walks. This is how Jesus heals us from crippling of sin. He does not plead with us. He has compassion and heals us. May we hear his voice and thank him by a walk of sanctification. Sing Psalter 310.

April 16 Read [John 5:10-15](#)

This miracle stirs up a firestorm in Jerusalem. Jesus would answer many questions about it, but because his hour was not yet come he would not be taken. The important idea for the man is found in verse 14. There we find that the impotent man was healed not only bodily but spiritually as well. If he had not been made completely whole, it would have been better for him that he lay by the pool for another thirty-eight years. But now when Jesus pronounces him whole he can live a life of thankfulness. We must learn from this. By nature we are no better than that man of whom we know little. For we all have sinned and all have fallen short of the glory of God. Let us seek Jesus who alone is able to make us whole. Let us do this daily and pray daily for such healing. Sing Psalter 140.

April 17 Read [John 5:16-23](#)

Notice verse 23. Christ deserves the honor of all men. This is not the testimony of some in the world. Some will say that Jesus is not God. This was the word of a man named Arius. His declaration caused trouble in the church many years ago. Out of that trouble was written the beautiful Nicene Creed. Read it some time. It can be found in the back of our *Psalter*. Not only is Jesus God, but his work of salvation is the work of God alone. Our salvation is laid out beautifully in the Scriptures. We must believe all of that work and not, as many do today, reject part of it. For, to reject part of it is to reject the Father, and then there is no salvation. Sing Psalter 222:1-3.

April 18 Read [John 5:24-32](#)

Notice the many truths in this portion of Scripture which testify of that which is to come. Christ by his work on earth assured us of eternal life. That is the life spoken of in verse 25. He continues to tell of the resurrection of the dead. As we throughout our lives lay loved ones to rest in the grave, we do so in hope. We have the assured hope that Christ will raise his people from the dead. That is verse 29. Finally, we see that this is the will of the Father. From all eternity God has elected a church unto himself, ordained salvation through Christ, and will gather these elect to himself to live in heaven forever. What a wonderful promise that is to us! Sing Psalter 33.

April 19 Read [John 5:33-40](#)

Notice verse 39. It is one we should remember. Christ told the Jews to search the Scriptures and see that they spoke of him. We, too, should search the Scriptures. We should see how they testify of Christ our Savior. On each page of Holy Writ, we find evidence of the means of our salvation. After we search the Scriptures, then we must not be like the Jews. We must come to Christ daily, for only in him is life eternal. We need to be busy in that practice, knowing in that way we will receive the assurance of our salvation. Sing Psalter 337.

April 20 Read [John 5:41-47](#)

Jesus gives to those around him a stern warning. First of all, we see a warning against a behavior so evident today. This is the idea of honor. The world today loves to show honor to various kinds of people. But it is a shallow honor; one which fades as popularity fades. To honor God and his Son is a foreign thought. Witness what is done with the Lord's Day. Secondly, he warns them who say they believe the Bible to put their actions where their words are. Do they really believe the Bible? If they do, shouldn't they walk in those words? What about us? In what do we believe? Is it a shallow belief in some earthly person? Do we show we believe what God has written in his Word? These were hard sayings to the people who heard them. These are words of warning that we must heed today. Sing Psalter 314.

April 21 Read [John 6:1-9](#)

When Jesus did miracles, there was always some sign of God's grace toward his people. Miracles were not just a healing or a feeding, but there was always something spiritual about them. Those miracles done on those who were diseased were a picture of us being healed from the ravages of sin upon our spiritual souls. Miracles also show to us God's power. Even Andrew's question helps us to see this. God has power over all in creation today. We see healing where no healing was thought possible. Some would glibly say a miracle took place. But because our God is all-powerful, he brings all things to pass for his glory and the salvation of his people. Sing Psalter 403.

April 22 Read [John 6:10-15](#)

The first item of note in this miracle is that Jesus blessed the food. We may wonder why he did this. After all he was Lord of all. It was his by creation. These two facts we read in [Psalm 50](#) and sing in Psalter 137. But yet in his human nature, he looks to his Father and asks a blessing on daily bread. Does this teach us anything? Do we on occasion skip prayer because its too “inconvenient” or “embarrassing”? This should teach us to ask God’s blessing on our food each time we sit down to eat. Secondly, we see the reaction of the people to this miracle. They did not see the grace involved. They did not understand that this bread was a picture of Jesus himself—the bread of life. They were happy their bellies were full, they saw a chance to put work behind them, and so they wanted to make Jesus their king. Jesus’ hour was not yet come; therefore, he departed into a mountain to pray to his Father about that hour which awaited him. Sing Psalter 286.

April 23 Read [John 6:16-21](#)

“It is I, be not afraid.” In other places in Scripture we have these words, “Fear not.” What a wonderful group of words! When God speaks these words to us, is there any reason to be afraid? He takes all of our fears from us because he is our Father. Just as an earthly father will calm his son or daughter, so our heavenly Father will calm us. He can do this because he knows all things and brings all things to pass for “good to them that love God.” He puts his arms around us with these words and brings us peace through the Comforter who is the Holy Spirit. You will find this phrase many times in the Bible. There is one of those times for any of us no matter in what circumstances we may find ourselves. People of God, “Fear not, be not afraid.” Sing Psalter 152.

April 24 Read [John 6:22-29](#)

It does not matter to what we are called in this life; we must labor for the meat which does not perish. There is nothing on this earth for which we can labor since all on this earth will perish. If you are a student, you do not study for good grades, a good job, or for some other “good” thing, you must labor for the glory of God. This does not mean that we can be lazy in our callings. This would contradict other parts of Scripture, and Scripture never contradicts itself. People in the workforce do not labor for high pay, promotion, or any other aspect that might go with some occupation. They must labor for the kingdom of heaven. By laboring in this way God will be glorified and we will show thankfulness for the salvation wrought by his Son by his death on the cross. Sing Psalter 396.

April 25 Read [John 6:30-40](#)

One of Jesus' "I am's" is found in verse 35. "I am the bread of life." We in America do not think that bread is very important. Oh, some would miss it if it was not around, but many other types of food have taken its place. In the society and culture of those times bread was important. To be without bread usually meant starvation. So when Jesus tells them that he is the bread of life this had an impact upon them. Do we crave Jesus as the bread of life? Do we see the importance of Bible reading, study, and meditation? Are we hungry for it? That's the comparison here. Let us seek after the bread of life. Let us not let our Bibles gather dust, but rather let us read and study them even as we seek after food. Sing Psalter 287.

April 26 Read [John 6:41-51](#)

Let us look at verse 44. What a comfort that is for us! If it were left up to us to go to Jesus, none of us would. We would all find somewhere else to go, or something else to do. Think about when we have opportunities to study God's Word or to have fellowship with those of like faith; we often have many excuses about not being in attendance. The Father draws those whom he has elected to his Son. He brings them to him so that they may enjoy the bread of life. That life is everlasting life in heaven. Thanks be to God for such an unspeakable gift! Sing Psalter 332.

April 27 Read [John 6:51-59](#)

In his gospel John used events and teaching of Jesus to show that the crucifixion must come to pass, and that it was the way unto salvation. This passage is no different. As we read verses 51-53 we see this truth. Jesus came into this world for the purpose of dying on the cross in order that his people might be saved. Those who would be his people must believe in that sacrifice. There is no other way to salvation. John also used figures from Jesus's sermons that showed Old Testament pictures of Christ. as we see portrayed by the manna. The Jews of that day should have understood the pictures. Are we any better when we read the Word and see the signs of the end in creation? Thanks be to God for the gift of the crucified Savior, and may he every draw our minds to Christ's return through the signs all around us. Sing Psalter 47.

April 28 Read [John 6:60-71](#)

Whenever we think of listening to some other gospel, we should remember Peter's words, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Peter, the impetuous one, was known for blurting things out without thinking. This time the words that he spoke were the whole truth. There is no one else to whom we can turn. In any difficult situation we must learn to "cast our burdens upon the Lord" for "he careth for us." We may be tempted to do otherwise. We may try to rely on our own strength. We may try to rely on the strength of others. The child of God will soon be brought back to Christ. This does not

mean we may not use means. We may and we should, but we must remember that those are in his sovereign hands as well. There is no where else to go; let us go to our Father who will not let us go lost. Sing Psalter 150.

April 29 Read [John 7:1-10](#)

Jesus' own brothers did not believe before he was crucified. We know that at least one believed after his resurrection, as James became a pillar in the church. They were watching his "career," however. They thought he might "go places" and they did not want to be left out. But they, like so many then and so many today, were looking for the wrong kind of a kingdom. They were looking for glory on this earth and that they wanted a part of. What about us today? Are we looking for things above where moth and rust do not corrupt? We have been placed into this world to prepare us for the life to come. Let us walk with our eyes fixed on the goal that awaits us which is not earthy but spiritual and heavenly. Let us eagerly await the kingdom where all glory is given to God our Creator and Father. Sing Psalter 131.

April 30 Read [John 7:11-18](#)

Notice verse 12 again. "He is a good man..." This is what many want Jesus to be. Even in the world today this is what man wants of Jesus. They only want a good man. They do not want salvation by faith in a risen Savior. If Jesus is only a good man, then man must do some works for salvation. If Jesus is only a good man, then any of his doctrines which are not popular can be ignored. As I have written before, John's aim in his gospel is to show who Jesus the Savior is, and what the way of salvation is. That way is not found in the doctrine of those who say that Jesus was only a good man. What do we say of Jesus? Sing Psalter 110.

May 1 Read [John 7:19-27](#)

Notice verse 24. We fall short here very often. We often enter into judgment against a person, but our standard is faulty. We judge on the basis of looks, wealth, style, or some other earthly standard. Christ tells us to judge righteously, that is judge according to a righteous standard. That standard is Christ himself who fulfilled the law by his life and death on this earth. In Matthew Christ taught "Judge not that ye be not judged." Let us be careful in our judging knowing that we will be judged in the last day. Sing Psalter 223.

May 2 Read [John 7:28-39](#)

Jesus's hour had not yet come. He had work to do. As we see in verse 31, many believed. Satan was working furiously to stop him as we see in verse 32. Then Jesus

speaks the seemingly cryptic words in verse 33 and 34. We see one of the effects of preaching in verse 35. We see unbelief. True preaching exposes those who wish nothing to do with the Christ. Some will scorn it as we see in that verse. Some will plead ignorance as we see in verse 36. What about us? Are we among those who believe and worship in spirit and in truth? Let us pray for the grace to believe each day and to walk in a manner pleasing to our Lord. Sing Psalter 325.

May 3 Read [John 7:37-43](#)

Every man thirsts, but yet not everyone knows that he is thirsty. Some are not given that grace, but to us who are given the grace to realize that we thirst there is a fountain prepared for us. What a fountain that is! Just as Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the beginning of his ministry, he will provide for his people the water of life. When we know we thirst, let us not ignore that well. Let us not ignore the means of grace by which we can drink from that well. This is the glorious gospel of grace which is proclaimed each Sunday. In the last few verses of this section we see again the two-fold response to that gospel. What is our response? Sing Psalter 337.

May 4 Read [John 7:44-53](#)

The condemnation of the chief priests and Pharisees will be great in the final day. Here we have the testimony of men that heard Christ and the Pharisees called them deceived and not knowing the Scripture. We must be careful not to fall into their error. When we hear the word preached we must not dismiss it as the word of a man. We must go and hear Christ. Secondly we must not fall into Nicodemus's error. He was timid. He went by night; he does not persist in his defense of Jesus. We must be willing at anyplace, at anytime, to anyone to defend our Lord. Let us pray daily for the grace to do this knowing that we will receive a blessing from our Savior. Sing Psalter 388.

May 5 Read [John 8:1-11](#)

Which of the two parties are we in this incident? Are we the ever condemning Pharisees, or are we the sinning woman in need of forgiveness? The self-righteous Pharisees attempted to trap Jesus in the guise of being offended at a breaking of the law. Jesus listened to their complaint and then reminded them of their ever-present sin. After they left, probably in anger, Jesus spoke wonderful words to the woman, and to all of his people. "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." Again I ask us the question, "Which of these two parties are we?" By nature we would be Pharisees; by grace we are not condemned. Let us go throughout our lives and sin no more. Sing Psalter 24.

May 6 Read [John 8:12-20](#)

Jesus is the light of the world! This is a light which has no equal. Even the best halogen lights of the day put out a very dim beam when compared with the Christ. But yet that light blinded many who heard him preach. Because they did not have the eyes of faith, they could not see the truths that were so plainly held out before them. What about us? Does the light shine brightly upon our path, or do we block it out through unbelief? Jesus was that true light. Many ignored it in his day; many more ignore it now. Let us pray for the grace to walk in the light as it shines brightly around us. Sing Psalter 73.

May 7 Read [John 8:21-29](#)

Notice Jesus' continued insistence that his work was from the Father. John is continuing to point out Jesus's divine nature. It was a nature that was necessary to bare the awful wrath of God on account of our sins. This nature was prophesied of Jesus in the Old Testament prophets. The Jews of Jesus day, especially those who were leaders in the church, did not want to believe on that nature. What about us? Who do we want Jesus to be? Do we want him to be our Savior? We had better because there is no other way to salvation. Sing Psalter 14.

May 8 Read [John 8:30-41](#)

Once again in these verses we see the two effects of the Word. To some it is the savor of life unto life, and to others it is the savor of death unto death. ([2 Cor. 2:16](#)) For those who believe, the truth makes them free. What a glorious thing this is! We become free from sin's slavery. We become free to walk in God's good words that he has ordained for us. The truth does this! Not the lie, not some watered down version of the truth. But the truth that is found in Scripture, revealed unto us by the Spirit through grace. May we ever enjoy that truth now and in the world to come. Sing Psalter 338.

May 9 Read [John 8:42-59](#)

Notice the importance of verse 51. There are many in this world who do not believe in a life after death. Or if they do, it is dependent on how they have lived on this world. Keeping Jesus' sayings is a necessity. We need to read the truth, know the truth, learn the truth, love the truth. and above all live the truth. By doing those things we will have everlasting life. Let us seek that life in a life of obedience to our God. Sing Psalter 227.

May 10 Read [John 9:1-7](#)

Notice the end of verse 3. "...That the works of God should be made manifest in him." There are times in which we wonder why. It does not have to be sickness or death. It may be some other circumstances in our lives. We sometimes want to know why something is happening. We look for some reason in our lives. Even though sometimes it may be because of something we have done, the most comforting and instructive answer is so "...That the works of God should be made manifest in him." Is this our knowledge? Is this our belief? Is this our comfort? If this is our confession, we will be comforted by the words of Paul that "all things work together for good to them that love God." May God be glorified in us and in all that happens to us. Sing Psalter 405.

May 11 Read [John 9:8-17](#)

In healing this blind man, Jesus opened a hornet's nest among the rulers of the Jews. An obvious miracle is being discredited in any way possible. The man is forced to repeat his story over and over to these rulers. They attempt to find holes in it. They say that because the miracle was done on the Sabbath that Jesus must be a sinner. The blind man is not easily cowed as we shall see as we continue in the passage. What about us? Do we believe in Jesus as the one who has healed us from spiritual blindness by dying on the cross? Are we content with this way of salvation or do we try to invent some other way more pleasing to our natures? The watchword of the reformation must still live in us. Salvation by faith alone! Sing Psalter 251.

May 12 Read [John 9:18-23](#)

The Jews in their obstinate unbelief now try to dissuade the man's parents that it was Jesus who had healed their son. We do not know of the parents' faith. But we see that if there was any, it was weak. They first try to just say that their son who was blind now sees. The reason that they say this is found in verse 22. They were afraid of an evil edict that if you confessed that Jesus was God you would be removed from the church. They then try to deflect the questions back to their son. What about us? How strong is our faith? Will we take a stand for the name of Jesus? Will we do it even if it means "loss" of our place in a church? What about loss of our lives, our families? Are we ready and willing to take up our crosses and follow Jesus even unto death? Let us pray for the grace to do just that. Sing Psalter 228.

May 13 Read [John 9:24-34](#)

We see here another attempt by the Jews to discredit Jesus as the Son of God. They begin to badger the man who was healed. They want him to disavow that Jesus did the miracle. The man did not bow to their attempt. Then in verse 33 he makes a wonderful statement about Jesus. By faith he says that Jesus had to be from God. This makes

them furious. Would we stand in the face of such opposition? Would we confess our Lord even if it was the unpopular thing to do. By God's grace we would. Let us pray daily for such grace. Sing Psalter 123.

May 14 Read [John 9:35-41](#)

The incident concerning the man born blind ends with a confession of faith. As Jesus stated in the beginning, this man was born blind so that God could receive the glory. And that was so. The only way that this man could confess Christ was through the glorious gospel of grace. He and we cannot believe by our works or by any keeping of the law. We believe by faith that comes through grace. This grace is the gift of God to those for whom Christ came into the world. May we daily give thanks for this gift and may God be glorified in our healing. Sing Psalter 30.

May 15 Read [John 10:1-6](#)

Jesus begins a series of comparisons that were familiar to the Jews. The Jews were known for sheep herding. So when they heard this discourse, they knew of what Christ was speaking. He is doing two things here. First of all, he is establishing himself as the true shepherd. Secondly, he is identifying the present rulers as false shepherds. This is evident in these first few verses. In verse 6 we see their stubbornness. They did not want to see themselves as false shepherds. They knew what the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel had said about such shepherds. Christ's sheep would follow him because he made himself known unto them. He did this by a powerful word. Do we know the voice of Jesus? Do we want to hear it? Sing Psalter 219.

May 16 Read [John 10:7-15](#)

Throughout the book of John, John shows to the church who Jesus is and what is his work. Here in these verses we have two examples. John captures Jesus' words as he speaks "I am..." First of all we see that Jesus is the door. He is the door that is the way to salvation. One of the major themes of the gospel of John is the work of Christ in salvation. It is only through him that his people enter heaven. As a door there are two functions. The first is to let those into salvation who are appointed for it. The second is to bar those who are not his sheep. Both of those functions make it evident that salvation is by grace and not by any work of man. Sing Psalter 398.

May 17 Read [John 10:10-15](#)

Jesus continues his discourse on his work comparing it to that of a shepherd. He is the good shepherd. He does not do his work haphazardly or lackadaisically. He does his

work, and he carries it out faithfully even to the point of dying for us. He knows us, and in that knowledge he loves us. What a comfort for us to know that Jesus is our shepherd! Like the Psalmist of old, our children and we can confidently confess, “Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want...” Sing Psalter 53.

May 18 Read [John 10:16-21](#)

The words of verse 16 bring to us great comfort. We are among those other sheep of which Christ speaks. We, by grace, hear his voice, are brought into the fold, and follow the true Shepherd. This happens because Christ went to the cross and paid for our sins with his life. He did that because of the love of the Father towards us. How do we treat our Savior? Do we call him a devil, or do we walk in the right path following the good guidance of our Shepherd? As we walk day by day let us give thanks for that guidance. Let us eagerly await the day when we will “dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Sing Psalter 221.

May 19 Read [John 10:22-30](#)

Perseverance or preservation of the saints is the fifth petal of TULIP, the Reformed acronym that we love. Of that preservation is what Jesus assures us in verse 28. As his sheep we have the blessed assurance that he will never let us go. Nothing on this earth or out of this earth can take us away from our blessed Savior. This is of utmost comfort to the child of God. The aged saint need not fear death. The new parents need not fear death because Christ has conquered death and made us his own forever. Let us follow the true shepherd all the days of our lives. Sing Psalter 55.

May 20 Read [John 10:31-40](#)

John again emphasizes the fact that Jesus is the Son of God. The Jews of Jesus’ day wish to discredit him on that fact. Is it any different today? Do people of the world want Jesus to be the true Son of God? Or do they just want him to be a good man whose example is worthy of their following? What about us? Who do we say that Jesus is? Is he the Son of God? Is he God? If we cannot confess that Jesus is the Son of God and God himself, he will not confess us to the Father. If he does not confess us to the Father, we have no eternal life or any hope of reaching eternal life. Then, we are of all men most miserable. Let us walk in his light that we might see light. Sing Psalter 72.