

# Saturday

**And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.**

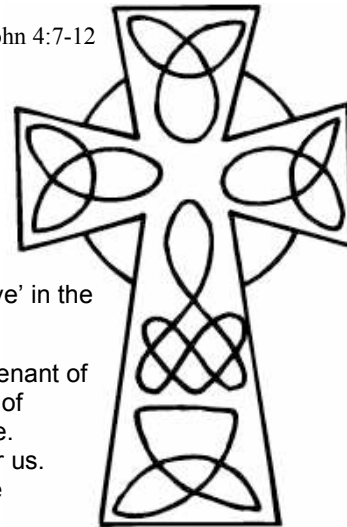
**Amen**

**Read:**

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son

to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

- 1 John 4:7-12



**Think**

1 John 4:10 is key: 'In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.' The rest of what John has to say is a little confusing – perhaps you should count how many times he uses the word 'Love' in the above passage.

The covenant between people and God is not a covenant of law – it is a covenant of love. As we say this prayer of surrender we are volunteering ourselves in response. Nothing we can say or do can change God's love for us. God's love for us is complete. The story of the Bible testifies to God's constant love – despite humanities constant rebellion.

In response to the giant wave of love that washes over us – when we say the covenant prayer we agree to stop fighting the wave and allow it to have sway in our lives. The ultimate goal is that finally we would be perfected; that we would love perfectly – as God loves us perfectly.

**A Prayer of Covenant**

Today, O Lord, I say YES!  
to you,  
to life,  
to all that is true, and good and beautiful.  
Amen

- Richard Foster

Will you surrender to that love?

# Preparing for Covenant



## Paarl Methodist Church 2011

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# Thursday

let me be employed for you  
or laid aside for you,  
exalted for you or brought low for you;

## Read:

<sup>8</sup> Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days you shall labor and do all your work. <sup>10</sup> But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your

towns. <sup>11</sup> For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

- Exodus 20:8-11

## Think:

Sabbath keeping is not a popular discipline. When we were children who grew up in the city we would go with my parents to the coast for holidays. For some reason we often travelled back on a Sunday – we would marvel at the small towns on the way home – where absolutely NOTHING happened on a Sunday. Even the petrol stations were closed.

It seemed like an awful idea then – but as I've grown up a bit; I long to find that kind of town; where 'being laid aside' is as important as being busy. What task is God calling you to take up? What is God asking you to let go of?



### A Prayer of Relinquishment

Today, O Lord, I yield myself to you.  
May your will be my delight today.  
May your way have perfect sway in me.  
May your love be the pattern of my living.

\* \* \*

I surrender to you  
my hopes,  
my dreams,  
my ambitions.  
Do with them what you will,  
when you will, as you will.

\* \* \*

I place into your loving care  
my family,  
my friends,  
my future.  
Care for them with a care  
that I can never give.

\* \* \*

I release into your hands  
my need to control,  
my craving for status,  
my fear of obscurity.  
Eradicate the evil, purify the good, and  
establish your kingdom on earth.

For Jesus' sake,  
Amen.

- Richard Foster

# Monday

I am no longer my own, but yours...  
...I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure  
and disposal.

## Read:

<sup>22</sup> He said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. <sup>23</sup> For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. <sup>24</sup> Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! <sup>25</sup> And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? <sup>26</sup> If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? <sup>27</sup> Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I

tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. <sup>28</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! <sup>29</sup> And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. <sup>30</sup> For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. <sup>31</sup> Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

- Luke 12:22-31 (NRSV)

## Think:

When I was a teenager there was a lot of talk about 'giving yourself to Jesus'; and 'surrendering to the Holy Spirit.' I was terrified of that idea – I prefer to be in control. I wasn't quite sure what would happen to me if one day I said to God – 'OK you can have control of my life now.' And then one day; after much thought and debate in my mind I thought I would 'give myself to Jesus' and 'surrender to the Holy Spirit'.

Nothing too terrifying happened (as I'd imagined it might). I didn't suddenly become a holy Joe; I didn't lose my identity; all I felt was a sense of relief as I allowed God to take responsibility for me.

In the passage above Jesus encourages his disciples not to worry about anything because God loves them and will care for them. As you consider our covenant prayer of surrender – can you trust God enough to entrust yourself to him?

### Pray

Take, Lord, all my liberty,  
my memory, my understanding,  
and my whole will.  
You have given me all that I have,  
all that I am,  
and I surrender all to your divine will.  
You have given me all that I have,  
all that I am,  
and I surrender all to your divine will.  
Give me only your love and your grace.  
With this I am rich enough,  
and I have no more to ask.  
Amen.

- Ignatius of Loyola