

## CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

### Daily Devotions

By Carl M. Zorn

for the

Eighteenth Sunday After Trinity

-WEDNESDAY-

*It must needs be that offenses come.* – Matthew 18:7

*"It must needs be that offenses come,"* says our Savior. In this wicked, *"adulterous, and sinful"* (Mark 8:38) world it cannot be otherwise. By word and behavior, by speech and example, there are abundant, yes, thousand-fold temptations and enticements to wickedness. You surely know this, my dear Christian. Are you not surrounded by false teachers of all descriptions, by *"false apostles"* (II Corinthians 11:13a), by *"scoffers"* (II Peter 3:3), coarse as well as refined, by sects and fanatics of every hue and color, by followers of Antichrist, by men and women who persistently lead a life of vice and shame, who drink in wickedness like water? Must it then not need to be that offenses come? Most certainly! All the world is full of offenses, of temptation and enticement to evil. And you are brought face to face with these things. But do not take and receive such offense! Even as you must not give offense, so also you must not allow others to offend you, to seduce you, to lead you away from your dear Savior and His Word of truth and grace. Let the words of Holy Scripture, written down by the Apostle Paul in Romans 8, be your great comfort, your enduring strength, and never-failing encouragement: *"If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"* (vv. 31-32). This same apostle reminds us of the divine *"armor"* (Ephesians 6:13) which our gracious God has provided to us to help us successfully fight against and resist the many offenses which come our way in this world when he says to us: *"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God"* (vv. 14-17).

**PRAYER** – O Lord Jesus, offenses surround me, but help me ever to confess with the psalmist: *"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ...I had fainted unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say on the Lord"* (Psalm 27:1, 13-14). O my dear Savior, help me to rely more and more on Thee and on Thy sure salvation. In Thy saving name we pray. Amen.

Why should cross and trial grieve me? Christ is near with His cheer; never will He leave me. Who can rob me of the heaven that God's Son, for my own, to my faith hath given?  
(*TLH*, Hymn 523, 1)

**Scripture Reading for Wednesday: Philippians 1:3-11 Theme for this week: Love**