Sacredise Daily Worship

05 – 11 July 2026

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

It is always tempting to frame God's invitation in the terms of human systems of power, comfort, and knowledge. But, when we do this, we do not find the rest or the life of Christ. On the contrary, we end up trapped in systems of achievement, exclusivity, and constant striving, which contribute to our brokenness, even though we may seek to sanctify them with the name of Christ. The reality that we need to face as followers of Jesus, is that we often misunderstand what really brings us life and rest. We often seek for God's life in the wrong places, and we often seek for God's rest in things that only lead us into further striving, busyness, and exhaustion. This means that we need to listen more carefully to what Jesus offers when he calls us to enter God's rest.

To begin with, we need to be willing to hear that God's rest is usually found in places which we view as the least likely. We will need to be willing to place our faith in the ways of Christ that go against the current of the society around us. If we genuinely seek God's life and rest, we will automatically place ourselves apart from the strategies of the world around us. This may mean that we will be seen as aloof or critical of the world, and so we may experience some rejection or even conflict. But, the paradox of the Gospel is that God's life and rest, God's comfort, and healing, can be found and experienced even in the midst of crisis, pain and suffering.

This week we will listen again for God's call to rest, we will seek to share this call with others, and we will discover that joy is available to us, no matter what we may be facing in our lives.

SUNDAY 05 JULY 2026

Read: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Reflect: In today's reading, Jesus describes his generation as children who, when playing certain songs, get upset that God's messengers refuse to respond as expected. John did not play by society's rules, but lived in a radically different way, and so the people criticised him. But then Jesus stepped into society, and participated in feasts and celebration, and people criticised him. Essentially, neither Jesus nor John followed the values of their society, and so the leaders of society, those who were most invested in the status quo, felt threatened by them and sought to silence them. This scenario remains today. Those who seek to live the Gospel's values fall out of step with the "music" of our society. They march to a different drum, and so are seen as threatening by those who are invested in society's systems.

This is why Jesus prayed that God had hidden these things from those who think of themselves as clever (in the world's ways). But, to those who are willing to become like children and learn a new way, God's truth is revealed. And, when we receive God's truth – God's new way of being and living – we are liberated from the striving, and the competition of this world's systems, and we find rest in God's values of simplicity, sharing, mutual care, and collaboration.

The quest for God's rest cannot find its goal in the values of our world – even if we claim Christ's name. Rather, we need to seek God's life in marching to the drum of God's rhythms of grace and faith. How can you march to God's different drum today?

Do: In a world where "time is money" obsessive busyness, ostentatious consumption, and the quest for constant improvement seem to be the obvious and natural ways to live. But God's rest is found in the inefficiency of stillness, prayer, sharing, and contentment. These are values that are learned through meditation – becoming still, restful, and willing to wait in God's presence. Make time for the practice of meditation in your day today.

Pray: I come to you, O God, to find rest and life in the rhythms of your grace.

MONDAY 06 JULY 2026

Read: Jeremiah 27:1-11, 16-22

Reflect: Today's prophecy by Jeremiah was not addressed to God's people, but to some of the surrounding nations. And it would have been startling since he claims that God was not just Israel's God, but

was God over all people, and was at work in all nations. The most shocking idea, though, was that the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar was God's servant (verse 6)! The idea that God could work through a pagan king would have been tantamount to blasphemy to some of Jeremiah's hearers. Yet, this is what he says. And he calls Israel and the surrounding nations to surrender and reject the shallow optimism of the false prophets, to accept the consequences of their disobedience, and to recognise what was going on in the world, while looking for God's activity through it all.

While today's reading may feel a little like history is a cosmic chess game in which God moves people and nations like pawns, this is not what the prophet is saying. Jesus revealed a more nuanced view of God's involvement in human history. We do well to remember this, even as we hear Jeremiah's call to reject false optimism, to respond wisely to the movements of history, and to trust God's grace and justice even in the most surprising people and places. When we resist history, and deny God's activity in it, we fall into a frantic quest to control events in our own strength and wisdom. But, when we remember that God is the lord of history, we can rest in our faith, and seek simply to cooperate with what God is doing in the world, as far as we can discern it.

Where do you see God at work in your world today? How can "lean into" God's activity, trust it, and participate in it?

Do: The practice of prayer is meant to teach us what God is doing, and to empower us to collaborate with God. This means that we begin from a place of listening and observing. Then, as we see God's activity, we ask God to guide us into meaningful contribution to God's purposes. Try to pray like this today.

Pray: Show me what you're doing in my world, O God, and guide me to participate as I am able.

TUESDAY 07 JULY 2026

Read: Romans 3:1-8

Reflect: The Roman Christians were battling with how to bring two different groups of people into one community. The Jews and the Gentiles were very different in terms of culture, belief, and practice, and when they sought to come together in the new Christian community, it often led to conflict and misunderstandings. Sometimes the Jews felt that God had been unfaithful to God's promise, and some of the Gentile believers felt that God's grace gave them a free-for-all in which they could do whatever they liked without concern for judgement or consequence. Paul's strong response called the church back to faith in God's promises and to faithful obedience to God's ways.

We may feel that God's call to service and God's call to rest are mutually exclusive. If we emphasise service, we may become driven and exhausted, and forget that rest is available to us. If we emphasise rest, we may feel that selfless service is an obstacle to God's abundant life, and we may be tempted to withdraw from the world and live in a "happy bubble with Jesus". But the truth is that abundant, restful life is found in community as we struggle to find and care for each other, and as we wrestle with what it means to live together as God's community. God's rest is found in living according to God's ways and denying our self-protection and self-gratification.

How can you embrace the journey of learning to find life and rest in God's community of love today?

Do: As we follow Jesus, we will keep bumping up against the call to do life with others, and to live in love. The simple practice of greeting can teach us to find greater comfort and peace with one another. When we make a point of greeting others with grace and attentiveness, we grow in our ability to find life together. Today, greet everyone you meet with a smile and an open heart.

Pray: I find my rest in you, O God, as I learn to live in your love and share life with others.

WEDNESDAY 08 JULY 2026

Read: John 13:1-17

Reflect: Foot washing was the work of the lowest slaves, yet Jesus graciously took on this role with his friends. Peter was offended that Jesus would serve his disciples like this, but he was still under the influence of a worldview that made teachers and leaders aloof, and to be served by those who were "less" than them. Jesus knew his new community would never be free of the quest for more power

and wealth and pleasure until they released the values of the society around them and learned to wash one another's feet.

Until we learn to accept having our feet washed by Jesus, we will be unable to take the role of a slave ourselves. We need to become humble enough to receive the gift of service and grace from Christ in order to find the grace and humility to serve others. This is why Jesus finished this sermon-in-action with a challenge and a blessing. The challenge was for us to follow Jesus' example and seek to love and serve those around us. The blessing was the promise that if we did this, we would know God's grace and rest.

How can you allow your feet to be washed by others today? And how can you wash the feet of your neighbours?

Do: Serving others most often means simply taking the time to be attentive to their needs and longings. Then, once we have learned to understand them, we can support and love them by standing with them and helping them in a way that is meaningful to them. Today, make time to listen to those around you, and then seek to serve them in simple, meaningful ways.

Pray: As you have "washed my feet", Jesus, so I seek to "wash the feet" of those around me.

THURSDAY 09 JULY 2026

Read: Isaiah 48:1-5

Reflect: The prophets constantly challenged God's people to hear and respond to God's word, God's message. They constantly assured the people that God's words would come to fruition, and that the people could trust what God was saying. But the people had a tendency to listen to other voices, and to go their own way, and then become angry with God when things didn't go their way. Or, when things did work out in their favour, they would claim that it was their idols that had done the work. Yet, even as these people expected God (or their idols) to keep promises, the people did not stay true to their word. Although they took oaths in God's name, and claimed to be following God's ways, they were fickle and unreliable in their relationships – both with God and with others.

Unfortunately, we know all too well what it is to live as Isaiah describes. We also know the temptation to be fickle and unreliable, to be dishonest and to break our promises. We also know what it is to place our faith in our idols (be it our wealth, our loved ones, or our own abilities and resources) more than in God. Like the ancient Israelites, we need to be reassured that God's word is trustworthy. We need to be reminded of God's promises, and we need to learn to place our faith in God's wisdom and ways. Part of this faith is recognising that God does not march to our tune, but that we are called to follow God's rhythms, no matter what life may throw at us. And as our faith grows, so we grow in our capacity to rest in God's grace and life.

Where do you need to learn to trust God's wisdom a little more? How can you rest in God's faithfulness a little more today?

Do: One of the problems we have with learning to trust God's word is that it is easy to lift isolated verses out of the Bible and make them say what we want. But, like false prophets or idols, these "words" seldom sustain us, because they are only a fraction of God's whole message. This means that we need to learn to take the whole of the Bible into account, and to learn to study it and interpret it responsibility. This is the work of a lifetime, and it is done in small daily portions. Today, make time to study Scripture and listen for God's word.

Pray: I hear your word, O God, and I trust in you.

FRIDAY 10 JULY 2026

Read: Psalm 65:9-13

Reflect: On Sunday, the Gospel reading is the parable of the Sower and the Seeds. Today's Psalm of praise resonates with this parable, reminding us that it is God who has created a world in which rain and soil and seeds work together in a mysterious harmony to create food and beauty and abundance. This world is a miraculously interconnected system in which plants, animals, and human beings all need one another, nourish one another, and support one another for the mutual benefit of all. This image of an interconnected world is a powerful metaphor for the work of God's word in the lives of people. The word does not work alone. It is "sown" into a particular

"soil" in our hearts and lives. It requires the nurturing and nourishing of the "water" of the Spirit. But, with the right conditions, the word bears fruit and transforms us.

There are two ways in which today's Psalm can challenge and inspire us. The first is to allow the metaphor of the life-giving earth and the seasons of seedtime and harvest to guide us in preparing our hearts for God's word each day. This image can lead us to "plough" our hearts, preparing ourselves through prayer and meditation to be more receptive to God's word. It can guide us to open ourselves to the "water" of the Spirit, which makes the word alive for us. And then we can receive the word with thanksgiving and willingness to be changed. But the second way today's Psalm can teach us is in our appreciation for the world. As we remember the miracle of agriculture, and the interconnectedness of our earth and its creatures, we can allow God's word to guide us in our care for creation through mindful, eco-friendly living.

How can you prepare your heart to receive the word today? And how can you allow the word to lead you into a deeper connectedness with creation?

Do: The practices of the spiritual life are all designed to prepare our hearts to receive God's word and bear fruit. However, when it comes to learning from the word to live an interconnected, mindful life that cares for all creation, few things are as powerful as the practice of thanksgiving. As we look around, like the Psalmists did, and give thanks for the beauty and life we see in our world, this gratitude leads us to value the earth and its creatures more, and to live more mindfully. Make today a day of constant thanksgiving.

Pray: I thank you, O God, for this interconnected world, and for your word that teaches us to live in it.

SATURDAY 11 JULY 2026

Read: John 12:44-50

Reflect: Jesus had a very clear sense of purpose and call. He knew he had been sent by God to be a light in the darkness, and he was not interested in judging people. He simply offered his message and then left people to decide how to respond. He knew that the "day of judgement" would reveal who had embraced his truth and who hadn't. While this may be speaking about some future time of judgement, it makes more sense to think of the judgement day as those situations in which our values and choices are tested by life's circumstances. In this sense, we all face many judgement days in our lives, and, when we have lived by the principles of Jesus, we discover that they carry us through these times with grace and joy. But, when we have rejected Jesus' message, which means we have chosen to live by the values of the world, we inevitably find that we do not have the resources to navigate what the world throws at us.

The other significant feature of Jesus' message in today's reading is his confidence that he revealed God. He made no apology for claiming that when people saw him, they were actually seeing the God who sent him. If this is true, any time our ideas about God contradict what we see in Jesus, our ideas are wrong. Which means that, if Jesus chooses not to judge, it is unlikely that God will find joy in judging people. Rather, God will allow our choices and values to be judged by life and by the realities of the world. But, at any point, if we embrace Jesus' truths, we will discover God's grace and life again. This is a message of great hope, but it also removes any space for us to step into the role of judge over anyone else.

What "judgement days" are you facing today? How are your values holding up? How can you embrace Jesus' message a little more?

Do: One of the reasons we praise Jesus, is because Jesus reveals God to us. As we focus on the person, the work, and the message of Jesus, we gain a clearer picture of who God is. And, as our vision of God grows, so our ability to hear and follow God's values and purposes grows. Today, allow your praises of Jesus to expand your vision of God.

Pray: I praise you, Jesus, because you reveal God to me, and empower me to follow God's ways.

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