



WHERE LIFE & PURPOSE CONNECT

## **Grow, Pray, Study for the Week of May 31, 2026**

### **Prayer for the Week**

God of beloved community, as I dwell in your presence this week: transform me. Let your goodness and grace bring clarity for my daily living. Give me the courage to act, to speak truth, to listen, and to embody your love for all. Amen.

### **Monday, June 1**

#### **Scripture: Matthew 23:5, 37 (NRSVUE)**

They do all their deeds to be seen by others; for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long... Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!

#### **Observation**

Jesus confronts leaders whose religion has become theater, their outward display divorced from inward love. At the heart of the passage is an ache: God longs to gather people the way a mother hen shelters her chicks, but hypocrisy makes that closeness impossible.

#### **Application**

Where am I performing faith for an audience rather than living it from the inside out? Beloved community cannot be built on performance or worries of our reputation. This week, choose one act of service or kindness that no one will notice or praise, and let that be enough.

#### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you long to gather us close. Strip away every layer of performance and show me where my faith has become more focused on appearance rather than character. Make me someone whose private life and public witness are the same. Amen

## **Tuesday, June 2**

### **Scripture: 1 John 4:20 (The First Nations Version)**

If someone says, 'I love the Great Spirit,' but hates a fellow human being, that person is speaking with a forked tongue. The one who does not love the brother or sister they can see cannot love the Great Spirit they cannot see.

### **Observation**

The phrase "speaking with a forked tongue" moves quickly to the point: claiming to love an invisible God while hating a visible neighbor is contradiction, not faith. John removes every escape route, as beloved community is built on love. Love of God is shown in how we treat one another.

### **Application**

Is there someone whom I find it easier to avoid than to love? Beloved community requires that I stop separating faith in God relationship with others. The two are intertwined, our love of God must move us toward loving one another. Today, reach toward one person I've kept at arm's length.

### **Prayer**

Creator God, let my love for you overflow into the people right in front of me, especially those I find difficult. Teach me that there is no shortcut to you that bypasses my neighbor. Amen.

## **Wednesday, June 3**

### **Scripture: Galatians 6:3–8 (The Inclusive Bible)**

If any of you think you are something when you are nothing, you deceive yourselves. Test your own work, and then you will have reason to boast in yourself alone and not in comparison with someone else. For each of you must carry your own load... Don't be deceived; God is not mocked, for you reap whatever you sow.

### **Observation**

Paul identifies self-deception as a corrosive force in community. When we measure ourselves against others, we stop doing the honest inner work that community requires. The law of sowing and reaping is not a threat but a description: communities shaped by pride and comparison will harvest division. God invites us into community that is shaped by love.

### **Application**

Am I carrying my own load, or spending energy managing how I appear to others? This week, resist one impulse to compare or compete. Instead, do the quiet, unglamorous work of self-examination. Ask: what am I actually sowing into the people around me?

## **Prayer**

Gracious God, save me from self-deception. Where pride and comparison have taken root, plant humility, honesty, and genuine care for others. Let what I sow today be worth harvesting. Amen.

## **Thursday, June 4**

### **Scripture: Mark 6:6b–8 (NRSVUE)**

He was amazed at their unbelief. Then he went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. He ordered them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts.

### **Observation**

Jesus is not stopped by unbelief; he notices and keeps moving. He sends disciples out stripped of security: no provisions, no reserves, no plan B. The mission is designed to require dependence on God and the hospitality of others. Self-sufficiency, not just opposition, can be a hindrance to community.

### **Application**

We are a people raised to admire self-sufficiency. But God created us, not in isolation, but in community. How does my need for self-sufficiency prevent me from fully experiencing the joy of community? Beloved community requires mutual dependence. Identify one area where you're carrying everything alone and practice the vulnerability of asking for help.

## **Prayer**

Jesus, loosen my grip on what I think I need to feel secure. Teach me to travel light and to trust in you and in the people you place beside me on the road. Amen.

## **Friday, June 5**

### **Scripture: Titus 1:16 (CEB)**

They claim to know God, but they deny God by the things that they do. They are detestable, disobedient, and disqualified to do anything good.

### **Observation**

Paul's language is sharp: "they deny God by the things they do." Love of God that is not embodied in action is not neutrality; it is a form of denying who God has called us to be. The way we act isn't just a personal matter, it impacts those around us. Are our actions strengthening or harming God's beloved community?

### **Application**

Where is there a gap between what I profess and what I practice? This is not a call to despair but to honesty. Beloved community suffers when its members live in that gap unchecked. As people of faith, we are called to close the gap between the way the world is, and the way God desires it to be. Identify one belief you hold that your behavior hasn't yet caught up to and take one concrete step to close the distance.

### **Prayer**

Holy Spirit, you are the one who brings my life into alignment. Where I have denied you by my actions without realizing it, show me what is mine to do. Remind me, clearly and gently, of your transforming work within me. Amen.

## **Saturday, June 6**

### **Scripture: James 1:22–25 (The First Nations Version)**

Do not fool yourselves by only listening to the Creator's word but not doing what it says. The ones who only listen and walk away are like those who look at their reflection in still water and then walk away and forget what they look like. But the ones who look carefully into the perfect law that brings freedom and keep on looking — not forgetting what they have heard but doing it — they will find a good road to walk.

### **Observation**

The image of still water as mirror is profound. James says God's word is meant to be a mirror that we stand before long enough to be transformed. "Keep on looking" suggests a sustained reflection, not a glance. How does God's word change your life?

### **Application**

Am I walking away from the mirror too quickly? Many of us read scripture too quickly; we don't linger long enough to let it change us. Today, read one passage slowly. Sit with it. Let it show you something. Then ask: what is one thing I can do differently this week because of what I saw?

### **Prayer**

Creator, let your word be still water before me today. Give me the courage to look long and honestly at what it reveals. Give me clarity and courage to walk the road it shows me. Amen.