



WHERE LIFE & PURPOSE CONNECT

Grow, Pray, Study for the Week of May 17, 2026

Prayer for the Week

Gracious God, as I enter this time of devotion, quiet my heart and open my spirit to Your presence. Help me to hear Your word with understanding, receive Your truth with humility, and follow You with faithfulness. Shape my thoughts, words, and actions so that my life reflects Your love today. Amen.

Monday, May 18

Scripture: Luke 16:1–13

Jesus also said to the disciples, “A certain rich man heard that his household manager was wasting his estate. He called the manager in and said to him, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give me a report of your administration because you can no longer serve as my manager.’

“The household manager said to himself, What will I do now that my master is firing me as his manager? I’m not strong enough to dig and too proud to beg. I know what I’ll do so that, when I am removed from my management position, people will welcome me into their houses.

“One by one, the manager sent for each person who owed his master money. He said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ He said, ‘Nine hundred gallons of olive oil.’ The manager said to him, ‘Take your contract, sit down quickly, and write four hundred fifty gallons.’ Then the manager said to another, ‘How much do you owe?’ He said, ‘One thousand bushels of wheat.’ He said, ‘Take your contract and write eight hundred.’

“The master commended the dishonest manager because he acted cleverly. People who belong to this world are more clever in dealing with their peers than are people who belong to the light. I tell you, use worldly wealth to make friends for yourselves so that when it’s gone, you will be welcomed into the eternal homes.

“Whoever is faithful with little is also faithful with much, and the one who is dishonest with little is also dishonest with much. If you haven’t been faithful with worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? If you haven’t been faithful with someone else’s property, who will give you your own? No household servant can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be loyal to the one and have contempt for the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Observation

This is one of Jesus' most puzzling parables. At first glance, it almost sounds like Jesus is praising dishonesty. But the focus of the story is not the manager's dishonesty, it is his urgency and creativity. In the ancient world, household managers oversaw finances and business dealings for wealthy landowners. A manager who lost his position would also lose his home, security, and social standing.

Faced with crisis, the manager acted decisively. Jesus uses this uncomfortable story to challenge disciples to think carefully about how they use resources, influence, and opportunities for God's purposes. Wealth itself is not condemned here; rather, Jesus warns against allowing money to become our master. Faithfulness in everyday decisions reflects the condition of our hearts.

Application

Consider how you use your time, money, influence, or possessions. What would it look like to use those gifts creatively and faithfully for God's kingdom today? Find one practical way to use your resources for someone else today. Pay for someone's meal, donate to a ministry, send a gift card, or offer practical help to a neighbor.

Prayer

God, teach me to be faithful with all You have entrusted to me. Help me to use my resources with wisdom, generosity, and love so that my life points others toward You. Amen.

Tuesday, May 19

Scripture: Luke 9:1–6

Jesus called the Twelve together and he gave them power and authority over all demons and to heal sicknesses. He sent them out to proclaim God's kingdom and to heal the sick. He told them, "Take nothing for the journey—no walking stick, no bag, no bread, no money, not even an extra shirt. Whatever house you enter, remain there until you leave that place. Wherever they don't welcome you, as you leave that city, shake the dust off your feet as a witness against them." They departed and went through the villages proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.

Observation

Jesus sends the disciples out with very little. In the first-century world, hospitality was an important cultural value, and travelers often depended on the kindness of others. By telling the disciples not to take extra supplies, Jesus teaches them to rely on God and on the community they encounter.

The disciples are not sent as powerful rulers or wealthy leaders. They are sent as ordinary people carrying extraordinarily good news. Their mission includes both words and actions: proclaiming the kingdom and healing people. The gospel is always both spoken and lived.

Application

Following Jesus often requires trust before certainty. Sometimes we wait until we feel fully prepared before serving, speaking, or stepping into something new. Yet Jesus reminds us that God's power is not dependent on our perfect preparation. Step into one opportunity today that requires trust. Encourage someone, volunteer to help, pray with someone, or begin a task you have been avoiding because you do not feel ready.

Prayer

Jesus, help me trust You enough to go where You send me. Give me courage to serve with compassion and confidence that You will provide what I need. Amen.

Wednesday, May 20

Scripture: Luke 17:1–6

Jesus said to his disciples, "Things that cause people to trip and fall into sin must happen, but how terrible it is for the person through whom they happen. It would be better for them to be thrown into a lake with a large stone hung around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to trip and fall into sin. Watch yourselves! If your brother or sister sins, warn them to stop. If they change their hearts and lives, forgive them. Even if someone sins against you seven times in one day and returns to you seven times and says, 'I am changing my ways,' you must forgive that person."

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

Observation

The disciples ask Jesus for "more" faith, perhaps imagining faith as something measurable that can be accumulated like wealth or knowledge. Jesus responds by shifting the conversation. The issue is not the quantity of faith but the presence of genuine trust.

In Jesus' time, the mustard seed was proverbially tiny. Mulberry trees, on the other hand, had deep and extensive root systems and were considered difficult to uproot. Jesus uses exaggerated imagery to show that even small faith can participate in God's transforming work. Faith is not about having perfect confidence or never doubting. It is about trusting God enough to take the next faithful step.

Application

You may feel that your faith is small today. Yet God can work through even the smallest acts of trust. Identify one situation where fear, discouragement, or doubt has kept you stuck. Offer it honestly to God and take one small step forward today.

Prayer

Lord, even when my faith feels small, help me trust You. Strengthen me to take faithful steps and believe that You are at work in ways I cannot yet see. Amen.

Thursday, May 21

Scripture: Acts 2:43–47

A sense of awe came over everyone. God performed many wonders and signs through the apostles. All the believers were united and shared everything. They would sell pieces of property and possessions and distribute the proceeds to everyone who needed them. Every day, they met together in the temple and ate in their homes. They shared food with gladness and simplicity. They praised God and demonstrated God's goodness to everyone. The Lord added daily to the community those who were being saved.

Observation

This passage offers a picture of the early Christian community shortly after Pentecost. These believers were not merely attending worship together; they were building a shared life marked by generosity, fellowship, prayer, and care for one another.

In the Roman world, social divisions between rich and poor, slave and free, male and female were significant. The early church stood out because believers crossed those boundaries in radical ways. Their generosity was not forced but flowed from transformed hearts and a deep sense of belonging to one another. The passage does not describe a perfect community, but it does show a community shaped by shared purpose and mutual care.

Application

Christian faith is not meant to be lived in isolation. We grow through worship, fellowship, generosity, and caring relationships. Strengthen community today. Call someone who may be lonely, invite someone to coffee, share a meal, or offer practical support to a person in need.

Prayer

God, thank You for the gift of community. Help me to live with generosity, kindness, and joy so that others experience Your love through my actions. Amen.

Friday, May 22

Scripture: Mark 2:18–20

John's disciples and the Pharisees had a habit of fasting. Some people asked Jesus, "Why do John's disciples and the Pharisees' disciples fast, but yours don't?"

Jesus said, "The wedding guests can't fast while the groom is with them, can they? As long as they have the groom with them, they can't fast. But the days will come when the groom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast."

Observation

Fasting was a common spiritual practice in Jewish life. It expressed repentance, grief, longing, and dependence on God. The question people ask Jesus is really about religious expectations: Why don't Jesus' disciples follow the accepted pattern?

Jesus responds with wedding imagery. Weddings in the ancient world were joyful, communal celebrations that could last several days. By comparing himself to a groom, Jesus signals that something new is happening in God's kingdom. His presence brings joy and celebration. He is not rejecting spiritual practices like fasting. Instead, he emphasizes that faith is ultimately about relationship with God, not merely performing religious habits.

Application

Spiritual disciplines matter, but they are meant to draw us closer to God, not become empty routines. Take ten intentional minutes today to focus fully on God. Find a comfortable place to sit or a quiet path on which to walk and then pray, read scripture, sit in silence, or take a walk with gratitude and awareness of God's presence.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for Your presence in my life. Help my faith to be more than routine, and draw me into deeper joy, trust, and relationship with You. Amen.

Saturday, May 23

Scripture: Micah 6:6–8

With what should I approach the Lord
and bow down before God on high?
Should I come before him with entirely burned offerings,
with year-old calves?
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with many torrents of oil?
Should I give my oldest child for my crime;
the fruit of my body for the sin of my spirit?
He has told you, human one, what is good and
what the Lord requires from you:
to do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with your God.

Observation

The prophet Micah spoke during a time when people continued religious rituals while injustice and corruption filled society. Wealthy leaders often took advantage of the poor, and worship had become disconnected from daily living. Through Micah, God reminds the people that faithfulness is not about extravagant offerings or impressive religious acts.

The questions in this passage grow more dramatic, showing how people sometimes believe they can earn God's approval through bigger sacrifices. But God's desire is much simpler and deeper: justice, mercy, and humility.

"To do justice" means actively seeking fairness and standing up for what is right. "To embrace faithful love" means showing compassion, mercy, and steadfast kindness. "To walk humbly with God" means recognizing our dependence on God and living with teachable hearts.

Application

God cares about how we treat people just as much as how we worship. Faith becomes visible through kindness, fairness, generosity, compassion, and humility in everyday life. Choose one intentional act of mercy or justice today. Encourage someone who feels overlooked, forgive someone, support a ministry serving others, or speak up for someone who needs support.

Prayer

God, shape my heart to reflect Your love and justice. Help me to walk humbly with You and treat others with compassion, mercy, and grace each day. Amen.