

Guide for the Preparation for Worship on 6 July 2025

6 July 2025 – Pastor Booth preaching

Call to Worship: Psalm 96:1-3

Opening Hymn: 171 O Word of God Incarnate

Confession of Sin

O great and everlasting God, Who dwells in unapproachable light, Who searches and knows the thoughts and intentions of the heart; We confess that we have not loved You with all our heart, nor with all our soul, nor with all our mind, nor with all our strength; Nor our neighbors as ourselves. We have loved what we ought not to have loved; We have coveted what is not ours; We have not been content with Your provisions for us. We have complained in our hearts about our family, about our friends, about our health, about our occupations, about Your church, and about our trials. We have sought our security in those things which perish, rather than in You, the Everlasting God. Chasten, cleanse, and forgive us, through Jesus Christ, who is able for all time to save us who approach You through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for us. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: Romans 5:6-8

Hymn of Preparation: 169 Master, Speak! Thy Servant Heareth

Old Covenant Reading: Proverbs 3:1-12 – Sermon Passage

New Covenant Reading: Matthew 6:25-33

Sermon Title: *Don't Waste Your Life*

Hymn of Response: 519 I Asked the Lord That I Might Grow

Confession of Faith: Apostles Creed (p. 851)

Doxology (Hymn 568)

Closing Psalm: 67A O God, to Us Show Mercy

PM Worship

91B Who with God Most High Finds Shelter

165 To Your Temple I Repair

518 Come, My Soul, with Every Care

Old Covenant Reading: Psalm 91:1-16

New Covenant Reading: Hebrews 10:19-25

Sermon Title: *Confidence in the Lord's Faithfulness*

No Sunday School – Extended Time of Fellowship

Suggested Preparations

Monday (6/30) Read and discuss Proverbs 3:1–12

My son, do not forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commandments,
for length of days and years of life
and peace they will add to you.

Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you;

bind them around your neck;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
So you will find favor and good success
in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.
It will be healing to your flesh
and refreshment to your bones.

Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline
or be weary of his reproof,
for the LORD reproves him whom he loves,
as a father the son in whom he delights. (ESV)

Commenting on the command “do not lean on your own understanding, Chuck Swindoll writes:

[The Hebrew term translated “lean” means] “to support oneself, as though leaning for assistance.” It occurs in Judges 16:26 where blind Samson leaned against the huge pillars supporting the Philistine temple. It also appears in 2 Samuel 1:16 where King Saul leaned upon his spear for support. It represents the idea of resting one's weight upon something else as though leaning on a crutch. You will notice the strong negative: “... do not lean on your own understanding.”

We have a gentleman in our church who could tell you about this much better than I. He was injured on a ski outing several years ago and as a result he was confined to crutches for many long weeks. Sometimes you could find him panting at the top of a flight of stairs. If you looked at his hands, you would notice they had gotten red and sore. The man found that leaning on crutches was exhausting.

So is leaning on our own understanding! If you want to spend an exhausting day, try to work out your circumstances leaning on your *human viewpoint*. Chase down all the possibilities you can think of. When you hit a dead-end street, back out, then turn down into another one. Drive fast, then slam on your brakes. Try a dash of panic, a pinch of fear, add a tablespoon of

manipulation, three cups of scheming, and a handful of pills! When you are through, consider where you have been. That is an excellent recipe for “instant depression.” Furthermore, you will be mentally exhausted. Peace will flee from you.

MAN says: Why trust when you can worry?
GOD says: Why worry when you can trust?

Read or sing Hymn 171 O Word of God Incarnate

Tuesday (7/1) Read and discuss Psalm 92

It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;
to declare your steadfast love in the morning,
and your faithfulness by night,
to the music of the lute and the harp,
to the melody of the lyre.
For you, O LORD, have made me glad by your work;
at the works of your hands I sing for joy.

How great are your works, O LORD!
Your thoughts are very deep!
The stupid man cannot know;
the fool cannot understand this:
that though the wicked sprout like grass
and all evildoers flourish,
they are doomed to destruction forever;
but you, O LORD, are on high forever.
For behold, your enemies, O LORD,
for behold, your enemies shall perish;
all evildoers shall be scattered.

But you have exalted my horn like that of the wild ox;
you have poured over me fresh oil.
My eyes have seen the downfall of my enemies;
my ears have heard the doom of my evil assailants.

The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
They are planted in the house of the LORD;
they flourish in the courts of our God.
They still bear fruit in old age;
they are ever full of sap and green,
to declare that the LORD is upright;
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. (ESV)

Life is not an endless bowl of cherries. Jesus is very honest when He warns us that “in this world You will have tribulation.” The Psalmist is equally honest.

In verses 6 through 11, the Psalmist introduces the fact that not everyone loves the LORD. To make matters worse, many people who don’t like God express their hatred of the LORD by hating the LORD’s people. That is, in this life there will sometimes be people who treat you badly simply because you are choosing to follow Jesus.

That may seem like really bad news, and it is, until we pull back the lens far enough to see that our enemies are no match for our God. You might want to summarize verses six through eleven under the words of the Romans 8:31: “If God is for us, **who** can be against us?” Let’s see how the Psalmist fleshes out this truth.

Verse 6:

The stupid man cannot know;
the fool cannot understand this:

If you are reading the NIV or the NKJV, you will notice that they use “senseless” rather than “stupid.” Some Hebrew scholars try to bring out the meaning by translating this expression “the brutish man cannot know.” Elsewhere this expression is used of beasts or cattle that are [naturally] insensitive to the right things (Ross).” “Senseless” and “brutish” are closer to the original meaning than “stupid,” because the Psalmist is not talking about people with low IQs.

The “senseless” person is someone who tries to live without reference to God. As Psalm 14 puts it: “The fool has said in his heart ‘There is no God.’” Such a person cannot understand all the beautiful things that we have just seen in verses 1-6. But thanks be to God – you can!!

We delight in the LORD, that while the proud who are rebelling against LORD cannot understand the things of God; the humble will hear and be glad!

Do you remember where Jesus rejoices in this very thing? In Matthew 11, Jesus prays:

“I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.”

Let us, with Jesus, delight in the wisdom and grace of our heavenly Father!

Read or sing Hymn 169 Master, Speak! Thy Servant Heareth

Wednesday (7/2) Read and discuss Matthew 6:25–33

“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (ESV)

Given how anxiety producing our culture can be – this is a passage that is worthy of your repeated meditation. Indeed, we need to keep reminding ourselves of three main points that flow out of this passage:

- Don’t sweat the small stuff.
- Remember that your heavenly Father loves you; and
- Focus on what matters – that is, “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness!”

This is all very important, but our lives aren’t changed by an outline. Our lives are changed when the LORD opens our hearts so that we understand His word and therefore put it into practice.

Michael Williams can help us do that very thing. Professor Wilkens writes:

I believe that one of the most important ways of actually carrying [out Christ’s teaching] is to learn to regularly express our gratitude to God for what He is doing, and what He has done, in preparation for relying on Him tomorrow. A way of reversing the trend toward anxiety is to look around at what we have and what God has done and then say, “Thank you.” That is the theme of the heartfelt chorus, “Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart,” which most of us have sung at one time or another. Whether we are weak or strong, poor or rich, Jesus’ teaching on wealth and worry is rooted firmly in what He has done for us. He is our Master and Provider, the One who has given us kingdom life, kingdom priorities, and kingdom values, by which we can truly say, “Thank You!”

So, let’s make a special point this week ... of giving thanks ... with a grateful heart.

Read or sing Hymn 519 I Asked the Lord That I Might Grow

Thursday (7/3) Read and discuss Psalm 91

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.
I will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust.”

For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler
and from the deadly pestilence.
He will cover you with his pinions,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.
You will not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness,
nor the destruction that wastes at noonday.

A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
You will only look with your eyes
and see the recompense of the wicked.

Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place—
the Most High, who is my refuge—
no evil shall be allowed to befall you,
no plague come near your tent.

For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.
On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.
You will tread on the lion and the adder;
the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

“Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him;
I will protect him, because he knows my name.
When he calls to me, I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble;
I will rescue him and honor him.
With long life I will satisfy him
and show him my salvation.” (ESV)

Tim Keller writes:

Two contrasting metaphors are used for God’s protection: a fortress filled with shields and ramparts; and a mother bird gathering her brood underneath her wings. The fortress has walls of impregnable strength. Spears and arrows make not a dent. The mother bird, however, shelters with wings that

are essentially fragile. She shelters her young from burning heat or rain and cold only by bearing them herself. The Old Testament does not explain how this impervious strength and sacrificial, loving weakness could be combined in God. It is on the cross where we see the absolute righteous power and tender, sacrificial love of God combine and shine forth brilliantly, both equally fulfilled.

These verses seem to promise that nothing bad will ever happen to believers. And when Satan quotes verse 11 to Jesus in the wilderness, that is what he suggests (Luke 4:9-12). The devil wants us to think that God's promises have failed if He lets us suffer. But the psalm later clarifies that God will save us "*in* trouble" not *from* it. Luke 21:16-18 says paradoxically that under God's care "not a hair of your head will perish" and yet "they will put some of you to death." The only things faithful people can lose in suffering are things that are finally expendable. The real you, the one God is creating, cannot be harmed.

Friday (7/4) Read and discuss Hebrews 10:19–25

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (ESV)

Tom Write comments:

I watched as my mother came in from shopping, carrying several bulging bags. She called me to help get the rest from the car. I couldn't think why she'd bought so much food, but I fetched and carried and unloaded as best I could. Then I remembered all the telephone calls the previous week. Normally she wouldn't make more than two or three calls a day, but there had been perhaps a dozen or two. Then, that evening, she enlisted my help again in tidying the main front rooms of the house, and in polishing a table here and some cutlery there. I was surprised, but didn't think more of it; I was no doubt living in my own small world, as children do.

But then, the following afternoon, the doorbell began to ring and one person after another came into the house. It was a party! All the shopping, phone calls and polishing had been getting things ready for a celebration. Friends and neighbors were invited. Everything was prepared. Now I saw where it had all been going.

Hebrews has now, if I can put it like this, done the shopping, made the telephone calls and polished the silver. At last the invitation goes out: come to the party! Verse 22 is the primary reason we've come all this way – collecting key passages from scripture, marshalling arguments here and there, calling up ideas and images familiar and unfamiliar, shaping and polishing the exposition of Jesus as God's son, the truly human one, the great high priest, the mediator of the new covenant. Now we see where it's all been going. 'Let's come to worship!' Verse 19-21 lay out, in summary form, everything we have seen so far: our boldness of access into God's presence through Jesus' blood, which takes us on a new, living path into the innermost shrine through the work of our high priest. The result of it all can hardly be anything but an invitation to draw near; and 'drawing near' is almost a technical term, in this context, for 'coming to worship.'

Read or sing Psalm 67A O God, to Us Show Mercy

Saturday (7/5) Read and discuss Proverbs 3:1–12

My son, do not forget my teaching,
but let your heart keep my commandments,
for length of days and years of life
and peace they will add to you.

Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you;
bind them around your neck;
write them on the tablet of your heart.
So you will find favor and good success
in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will make straight your paths.
Be not wise in your own eyes;
fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.
It will be healing to your flesh
and refreshment to your bones.

Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce;
then your barns will be filled with plenty,
and your vats will be bursting with wine.

My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline
or be weary of his reproof,
for the LORD reproves him whom he loves,
as a father the son in whom he delights. (ESV)

In this passage we are commanded to ...

Honor the LORD with your wealth
and with the firstfruits of all your produce.

Many Christians go through a period where they think that this is a burdensome call to self-denial or to pretending that we don't actually enjoy material things. Yet, instead of overcoming selfishness by suppressing desires, the Bible calls us to overcoming selfishness **by cultivating better desires**. There is nothing wrong with enjoying the material blessings that the LORD gives to us. Indeed, we ought to enjoy them more than unbelievers do precisely because the God who loves us has given them to us. Yet, as we mature in the faith we will discover that we actually receive more joy out of seeing people come to Christ, new churches getting planted, and foreign missions being advanced than we do from getting a new boat or car. It isn't that those latter things have become bad but simply that the former things have become even more precious to us.

Prayer: Please lift up tomorrow's morning and evening worship services.