

The Gospel | Jesus Is Lord!

Day 1: Guard Your Steps

Reading: Ecclesiastes 5:1-2

There is a warning posted at the entrance to every genuine encounter with God: pay attention to who you are approaching. Solomon urges worshipers to guard their steps, meaning that nearness to God is not casual territory. It demands awareness. Too often we arrive in prayer or worship already rehearsing our own agenda, our own anxieties, our own requests. But God is not a divine assistant waiting to take our order. He is the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. Before you speak to the Lord today, pause. Sit in the awareness of whose presence you are entering. Let that awareness reshape everything that follows. ***When you come to God in prayer, are you more focused on what you will say or on who He is? Before your prayer time today, spend two full minutes in silence simply acknowledging that God is present and that He is greater than every concern you carry into the room.***

Day 2: The God Who Speaks

Reading: Isaiah 55:8-9; Philippians 4:5-7

One of the most humbling realities of faith is that God's thoughts are not our thoughts. Isaiah describes the vast distance between the way God sees and the way we see. We see the immediate moment. He sees eternity. We see our circumstances. He sees our character and our calling. This is not meant to discourage us from bringing our cares to Him. Philippians makes clear that we are invited to bring everything to God with thanksgiving. But the invitation is to a conversation, not a monologue. After we have laid our burdens down, the wisest thing we can do is wait and listen for the One who sees what we cannot. ***Is there an area of your life where your perspective may be too limited and where you need to ask God for His? Write down one situation you have been trying to figure out entirely on your own. Pray over it today and then deliberately stop and listen, trusting that God sees more than you do.***

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Day 3: Mean What You Say

Reading: Matthew 21:28-31; Ecclesiastes 5:4-6

Solomon is blunt: it is better to say nothing to God than to make a promise and walk away from it. Jesus reinforces this in His parable of the two sons. The son who refused but later obeyed honored the father more than the son who agreed and did nothing. God is not impressed by our spiritual vocabulary. He is moved by our obedience. Many of us have made vows in moments of desperation, gratitude, or worship that we quietly abandoned when life returned to normal. Integrity before God means that our words and our lives tell the same story. Less said and more done is a form of worship. ***Is there a commitment you made to God that you have left unfulfilled? What is one step you could take today to honor it? Identify one promise or commitment you have made to God or others in His name. Take one concrete action today, however small, to move toward fulfilling it.***

Day 4: The Fear That Frees

Reading: Proverbs 9:10; Ecclesiastes 5:7; Luke 9:35

Solomon closes his instructions on worship with a simple and weighty command: fear God. This is not a fear that paralyzes but a fear that properly orients. When we lose our awe of God, we begin making decisions as though we are the most important person in the room. We fill our prayers with our own dreams, our worship with our own emotions, and our vows with our own intentions, all of which can drift far from what God actually desires. The disciples on the mountain heard the Father say to listen to Jesus. That command was not just for them. Awe produces attentiveness. When we truly revere God, we become far more interested in what He says than in what we think. ***In what area of your life have you been treating God more like a resource than a sovereign Lord worthy of reverence? Read one passage of Scripture today slowly and prayerfully, not to extract information but simply to listen to God speak through it. Let reverence guide the pace of your reading.***

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Day 5: The New Temple Listens for You

Reading: Hebrews 4:14-16; Matthew 17:5; John 1:14

Everything Solomon wrote about approaching God in the Temple finds its fullest meaning in Jesus. Jesus is the new Temple, the one through whom and in whom we come to the Father. The writer of Hebrews tells us that because of what Jesus has done, we can approach the throne of grace with confidence, not with fear of rejection but with expectation of mercy. The God who tells us to use fewer words is the same God who sent His Son so that we would never be without access to Him. He takes your presence in His presence seriously. He records every sigh, every tear, every honest word. Come near today, not because you have the right words, but because He has already made the way. ***Do you approach God with confidence in what Jesus has done, or do you still feel as though you must earn your way into His presence? Close this five-day guide the same way the sermon closed. Find a quiet place, take communion if you are able, and spend five minutes in silence before God. No agenda. No list. Simply come near and listen.***