



THE LIVING
WORD
OF
EASTER

A DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

May 14 - May 20



SEASON OF EASTER

Seventh Sunday of Easter

There is a word moving slowly but surely through John's Gospel like the tide coming in. It's the word *hour*. At the wedding in Cana, Jesus says his hour has not yet come. In the temple courts, no one can touch him because his hour has not yet come. And then, in the darkness after the Last Supper, the bread and cup still on the table, now, at last, the hour has come.

What does Jesus do with such a moment? He prays. He turns his face toward the Father and speaks in the language of love. And we are allowed to hear it. We are listening in on something holy, private, and cosmic all at once, something that has never stopped happening.

In John 17:1-11, he prays first for glory. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. But here is where the Gospel points to the glory that is there in the cross. When John uses this word throughout his Gospel, he means the lifting up, the crucifixion, the dying. The cross is the glory.

We want a God who shines brightly, who wins through an overwhelming display of force. But the glory of God turns out to be something else completely—God entering the suffering of humanity from within. He never looks away from the worst of what we have made of things. Instead, he moves toward it, wears it, bears it, and dies in it.

This is who God is: self-giving love, all the way down. And then Jesus says something incredible in verse 3: "This is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent."

Eternal life is knowing—the knowing of intimacy, of God's presence, and of belonging. The knowing between a shepherd and his sheep, between a beloved and the one who loves her. Eternal life begins now, when God is no longer an idea we manage but a presence we receive into our hearts.



And then, on the rough-hewn wood of the cross, Jesus prays for his people, “Father, keep them.” He knows what is coming. He knows they will scatter in fear. So, he entrusts them to the Father.

And the prayer doesn’t end with the eleven in that room. Jesus says, “I pray also for those who will believe through their message.” That is you. Your name was on his lips in that room. Before the nails and the silence and before the stone was rolled away he was praying for you. And he is praying for you still.

You are not held securely by your grip on God. You are held by the Father’s answer to the Son’s prayer, “Keep them.” And he does. Even now.

FOR reflection

***Jesus defines eternal life as knowing God—
a present reality, not only a future reward.***

***What would it mean for you to receive that kind of knowing
today, in the ordinary circumstances of your life right now?***

***Jesus prays “Keep them”—not strengthen them or fix them,
but simply keep them. Where in your life do you most need
to rest in the truth that you are being kept,
rather than striving to hold yourself together?***



SCRIPTURE

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Thursday

Psalm 47 or Psalm 93; Acts 1:1-11; Ephesians 1:15-23; Luke 24:44-53

Friday

Psalm 93; 2 Kings 2:1-12; Ephesians 2:1-7

Saturday

Psalm 93; 2 Kings 2:13-15; John 8:21-30

Sunday

Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35; Acts 1:6-14;
1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

Monday

Psalm 99; Leviticus 9:1-11, 22-24; 1 Peter 4:1-6

Tuesday

Psalm 99; Numbers 16:41-50; 1 Peter 4:7-11

Wednesday

Psalm 99; 1 Kings 8:54-65; John 3:31-36

Why do the daily readings begin on Thursday?

The daily readings for each week begin on Thursday and end on the following Wednesday. The Thursday through Saturday readings prepare the reader for the Sunday ahead. The Monday through Wednesday readings reflect on what was presented on Sunday.

The Morning Liturgy

Opening Scripture

This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 118:24

Opening Prayer (based on Psalm 51)

Open my lips, O Lord, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Give me the joy of your saving help again and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. *Amen.*

Scripture Reading (read Psalm and Gospel text here)

Period of Silence

Confessing Our Faith (Apostles' Creed)

The Lord's Prayer

The Collect

(Seventh Sunday of Easter: The Sunday after Ascension Day)

O God, the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: Do not leave us comfortless, but send us your Holy Spirit to strengthen us, and exalt us to that place where our Savior Christ has gone before; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

A Midday Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, “Peace I give to you; my own peace I leave with you.” Regard not our sins, but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and forever. *Amen.*

An Early Evening Prayer

Lord Jesus, stay with us, for evening is at hand and the day is past; be our companion in the way, kindle our hearts, and awaken hope, that we may know you as you are revealed in Scripture and the breaking of bread. Grant this for the sake of your love. *Amen.*

A Bedtime Confession and Prayer

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep, we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts, we have offended against thy holy laws, we have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and we have done those things which we ought not to have done. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, spare thou those who confess their faults, restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus our Lord; and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy name. *Amen.*

Visit this place, O Lord, and drive far from it all snares of the enemy; let your holy angels dwell with us to preserve us in peace; and let your blessing be upon us always; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



