



ENTER God's presence

Psalm 37:3-9

³ Trust in the Lord and do good;
dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

⁴ Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

⁵ Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him and he will do this:

⁶ He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.

⁷ Be still before the Lord
and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes.

⁸ Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;
do not fret—it leads only to evil.

⁹ For those who are evil will be destroyed,
but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.

- **Pray:** Jesus, you called your disciples, and us, to follow you. As much as we want to do that well, we often find ourselves looking back at what we leave behind in following you rather than what you have up ahead for us. We are so often drawn back to things you call us to leave behind. Help us, as we read your word together, to be reminded that when we submit our lives to you we gain so much more than what you call us to leave behind. Amen.



SHARE life together

1. What are your highs and lows since you last met?
2. Where have you seen people misuse their power or authority over others this week?
3. Where have you seen people disregard or ignore the rightful use of authority this week?
4. How does the idea of submitting to the authority of Jesus make you feel?

Week beginning:
Monday 24th March 2025

Worship series:
Wholehearted
#4 Wholehearted Submission



VERSE for the week

Jesus replied, "No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:62

(Full Text – Luke 9:51-62)



REMEMBER this week

Jesus wants you to submit all your life to him. Not only your eternal life, but also your life right here and now.

There is a scene, in the 2012 Marvel movie, 'Avengers', where one of the villains (Loki) is trying to threaten a group of civilians and he tells them this,

"Is this not simpler? Is this not your natural state? It's the unspoken truth of humanity, that you crave subjugation. The bright lure of freedom diminishes your life's joy in a mad scramble for power, for identity. You were made to be ruled. In the end, you will always kneel."

While that sounds pretty confronting, there is actually something Biblical about that claim. We were never created to be independent rulers. We were created to work with God, under his leadership and authority. It is when Adam and Even rejected that authority and sought to take that place for themselves that things started going wrong. We were in fact, made to serve God; not as slaves, but also not as equals. The problem being that if we are not prepared to 'kneel' before our loving heavenly Father and serve him, then Loki is right, we inevitably end up serving something else that does not have our best interests at heart.

Read the Luke 9:51-62 [here](#), or in your own Bible.

5. **Try to summarise the main idea of this passage.**
6. **What verse/concept/teaching in this reading caught your attention and what was challenging/confronting/comforting about it for you?**
7. **The beginning of this chapter, the 12 disciples have been sent out by Jesus with Jesus' power and authority to cast out demons, cure all kinds of diseases, and proclaim the kingdom of God. Now at the end of the chapter, James and John want to use that power to call down 'fire from heaven' on Jesus' enemies. What crucial thing did they do to avoid making that mistake?**
8. **In the second part of this reading, many people claim to want to follow Jesus, but they want to deal with other things first. What is Jesus response to their requests? What point do you think Jesus is trying to make?**



GROW deeper

Part of what Jesus is getting at in his response to all those who want to follow him, but feel they have to put other affairs in order first, is that if your life does become about following Jesus, real wholehearted following, then his priorities have to become yours. You can't follow Jesus and be looking back over your shoulder all the time at the sin, attitudes, misconceptions and lies that he asks you to leave behind.

It seems that many Christians today, want to follow Jesus but only on their terms. They want a God who will help them when they need him but stay out of their lives when they have everything under control for themselves. To put it another way, many Christians want a God whom they are happy to trust with their 'eternal life' but who they would rather stay out of their life right now. But Jesus is telling us to put our entire lives into his hands and to put all our effort into following him.

9. **Go back to the Loki quote at the top of the page. What things about it ring true for you about humanity and your own experience of it? What would change if we accepted the power and identity which Jesus has offered to each of us through his death and resurrection, rather than 'scrambling' to achieve and define those things for ourselves which we already have in Christ?**
10. **Jesus used the analogy of looking back while working a plough. It's maybe not a metaphor that connects with all us urbanised city folk. But the problem was that your ploughed rows would not be straight unless you fixed your eyes on a spot directly in front of you. You would inevitably end up 'off track'. What might be a modern day image or example that might communicate a similar truth?**



LIVE purposefully

MAKE IT REAL:

It can be easy to miss the parts of our lives that we have not submitted to Jesus, especially when life is going smoothly. It's also easy to miss when the parts we have not submitted are things like attitudes or things that we haven't done as opposed to the obvious things which we do that everyone else can see. The other mistake people make when it comes to following Jesus is that they feel they have to sort these things out before they will be accepted by Christ. Our reading today shows us that even if there are things in your life that need sorting out, Jesus invites you to follow him first, and then trust him to help you work it all out along the way.

11. **What is one part of your life that you do not think you have not fully submitted to the Lordship of Jesus?**
12. **What things (guilt, shame, fear, etc) do you think might be things that still hold you back from following Jesus 100%?**
13. **What is one practical thing you can do this week to help you submit those things to Jesus more completely?**

Plan your weekly devotions or [download the Church Central app](#) for the daily **LifeWay Devotions**



PRAY intentionally

- **Praise the Father**, for creating us to work in partnership with him.
- **Thank Jesus** for the chance to be put back in a right relationship with God the Father through his life, death, and resurrection.
- **Ask the Holy Spirit** to help you submit all of your life to Jesus every day.
- Pray for Pastor Nich and the Kitchen family as they prepare to join us at LifeWay at Epping.
- Pray for the world and its political leaders, that they would grow in submitting themselves to the Will of God and refrain from 'scrambling for power' over one another.
- Pray for all of LifeWay as we grow into this next season of our lives together as God's people, living his love, sharing his hope with all, and growing in grace together.



BLESS one another

You might like to address one person in your group and make the sign of the cross on their forehead or on the palm of their hand as you say...

[Name], Jesus is your Lord *and* your Saviour, may you find fulness of life in serving him. Amen.