SIX-DAY DEVOTIONAL

Take Your Place at the Table

Preserved by grace. Persistent in faith. Welcomed to the table.

A Six-Day Devotional Based on This Week's Sermon

PRIMARY SCRIPTURE

Matthew 15:21-28 - “Woman, you have great faith!” (NIV)

A week of recognising the grace that has kept us, approaching Jesus with persistent faith, and learning to live not as outsiders searching for crumbs, but as children welcomed to the Lord's table.

Based on the sermon preached by Pastor Louis on 19 July 2026

READ SLOWLY. REFLECT HONESTLY. PRAY PERSONALLY.

Each day is designed for about 15 minutes, including Scripture, reflection, three memory questions and prayer.

Scripture taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

DAY 1

The Testimony of Being Kept

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERMON

Pastor Louis centred the sermon on the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:21-28. She came to Jesus as an outsider, crying for her daughter, and the message moved from the language of dogs and crumbs to the dignity of a child seated at the Lord's table. Before developing that passage, Pastor Louis shared his own struggle: he had no dramatic story of rescue from drugs or rebellion because God had kept him from those places. The sermon asks us to recognise preserving grace, to approach Jesus with faith, and to stop living as though we are still beneath the table.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

Matthew 15:21-28 (NIV)

21 Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

22 A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."

23 Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

25 The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.

26 He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

27 "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."

28 Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Pastor Louis accepted Jesus when he was six years old. He grew up surrounded by prayer, church, Scripture and ministry. Later, when young people with shattered lives were saved from drugs and destructive choices, their testimonies filled the church with joy. Listening to them, he began to think, "I do not have a testimony." His life seemed too ordinary: God, family, school and church.

That comparison left him vulnerable to a dangerous thought: perhaps he could try what they had tried, return later, and then have a dramatic testimony of his own. In prayer, God corrected him. The same love, the same blood, the same cross and the same sacrifice that had brought others out had also kept him from going in.

That is a truth I must not overlook. Grace is not only seen when God pulls someone out of a pit. Grace is also seen

when God keeps someone close, redirects a choice, protects a mind, strengthens a family or holds a life steady over many years. Rescue is a testimony, and preservation is a testimony.

This leaves no room for pride. Pastor Louis said he could not glorify himself for the life he had lived, because all the glory belonged to God. Being kept does not mean I was naturally stronger, wiser or better. It means the cross was at work in ways I may not have recognised.

The challenge for me today is to stop measuring grace by drama. I need to remember the dangers God prevented, the prayers He answered, the people He used and the quiet ways He kept drawing me back. The same Saviour who met the woman in Matthew 15 has been nearer to my story than I may realise.

THREE QUESTIONS TO HELP ME REMEMBER

1	Why did Pastor Louis initially believe that he did not have an important testimony?
2	What did God show him about “the same love, the same blood and the same cross”?
3	What truth should I remember about the difference between rescue and preservation?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You not only for the places from which You have rescued me, but also for the places into which Your grace did not allow me to fall. Forgive me when I compare my story with someone else's and fail to recognise Your hand on my life. Let all the glory for my testimony belong to You. Amen.

CARRY THIS WITH ME TODAY

The same grace that brings people out is also able to keep me from going in.

DAY 2

Jesus Sees Faith

YESTERDAY IN ONE MINUTE

Yesterday I was reminded that preserving grace is a real testimony. Pastor Louis discovered that the same cross that rescued others from destruction had also kept him from entering it. Today the sermon turns from his testimony to the way Jesus looked at the people who approached Him: He perceived faith, He perceived unbelief, and He welcomed honest people who asked Him to strengthen their faith.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

Matthew 8:5-10 (NIV)

5 When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help.

6 "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly."

7 Jesus said to him, "Shall I come and heal him?"

8 The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed."

9 For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it.

10 When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith."

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Pastor Louis repeated a simple truth: Jesus perceived the faith in people. At times He praised faith and said, "Your faith is great." At other times He recognised unbelief and did not do among people what He could have done because they would not trust Him.

The sermon highlighted two outsiders whose faith amazed Jesus: the Roman centurion and the Canaanite woman.

Neither belonged to Israel, yet both came convinced that the answer was in Him. Their background did not give them a claim, but their faith brought them near.

This is encouraging because faith is not the same as pretending to be certain about everything. Pastor Louis also reminded us that Jesus receives the honest request, “Increase my faith.” I do not need to impress Him with confidence I do not have. I can come truthfully and ask Him to build what is weak in me.

But faith must still have an object. These outsiders did not merely believe that something good might happen. They trusted the authority, mercy and power of Jesus. The centurion believed a word from Jesus was enough. The woman believed that, although others saw her as distant and unqualified, her daughter's answer was still found in Him.

Pastor Louis described people from South Africa, Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe coming near to Jesus in the same way. Across borders, histories and languages, the same question remains: Do I believe the answer is in Him?

Today I need to bring my actual need to Jesus. I can also bring my lack of faith. He sees both. The goal is not to produce religious emotion, but to place my confidence in the One whose word carries authority.

THREE QUESTIONS TO HELP ME REMEMBER

1	What two things did Pastor Louis say Jesus perceived in the people who approached Him?
2	Which two outsiders were especially praised for their faith?
3	What honest request can I bring to Jesus when my faith feels weak?

PRAYER

Jesus, You see what is real in me. Where there is faith, strengthen it. Where there is unbelief, expose it with mercy. I believe that the answer to my deepest need is found in You, and I ask You to increase my faith. Amen.

CARRY THIS WITH ME TODAY

Jesus sees faith - even where other people see only an outsider.

DAY 3

A Cry They Wanted Silenced

YESTERDAY IN ONE MINUTE

Yesterday I saw that Jesus recognises both faith and unbelief. The centurion and the Canaanite woman were outsiders, yet they trusted that the answer was in Jesus. I was also reminded that weak faith does not need to hide; I can honestly ask Him to increase it. Today the sermon brings us closer to the woman's cry and to the people who wanted her sent away.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

Matthew 15:21-24 (NIV)

21 Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon.

22 A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly."

23 Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us."

24 He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

The woman did not come to Jesus for herself. She came carrying the suffering of her daughter. Her prayer was urgent, personal and persistent: "Have mercy on me... my daughter is miserably possessed." The pain of someone she loved had become her own cry.

The disciples heard the same cry, but they experienced it as an interruption. They urged Jesus to send her away. Pastor Louis pointed out that everyone could see she was not Jewish. Her speech, clothing and background marked her as someone outside their group. Before she reached the table,

she first met the resistance of people who believed she did not belong near it.

This part of the sermon is uncomfortable. People can stand close to Jesus and still make it difficult for a desperate person to approach Him. The disciples were not the answer to her need, but they were prepared to act as though they could decide who deserved access.

I must be careful not to confuse the impatience of people with the heart of Jesus. I may have been disappointed by a church member, a leader, a family or a community. I may also have been the person who treated someone else's cry as an inconvenience. In either case, the woman teaches me to keep directing my appeal to the Lord.

Jesus did not answer her immediately. Silence can feel like rejection, especially when other voices are already telling me to go away. Yet she did not leave. She believed that His silence was not the end of the story.

Her persistence also challenges my prayers for others. Am I willing to keep bringing a child, spouse, friend, community or nation to Jesus? The opening of the sermon included the assurance that God had heard the church's prayers. The woman's story reminds me not to stop praying simply because the answer is not immediate.

THREE QUESTIONS TO HELP ME REMEMBER

1	For whom did the Canaanite woman come to Jesus, and what did she ask Him to do?
2	How did the disciples respond to her repeated cry?
3	What did her persistence show when Jesus did not answer immediately?

PRAYER

Lord, have mercy on the people I carry in prayer. Keep me from giving up when Your answer seems delayed, and keep me from becoming an obstacle to someone else who is trying to reach You. Teach me to hear desperate cries with Your compassion. Amen.

CARRY THIS WITH ME TODAY

When the answer seems delayed, keep crying to the One who can answer.

DAY 4 Lord, Help Me

YESTERDAY IN ONE MINUTE

Yesterday I followed the woman as she cried to Jesus for her daughter. The disciples wanted her sent away, and Jesus did not answer immediately, but she remained. Her persistence warned me not to mistake human impatience or divine delay for the final answer. Today the sermon moves to the moment when she kneels, accepts the difficult words before her, and continues to appeal to Jesus.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

> **Matthew 15:25-28 (NIV)**
>
> *25 The woman came and knelt before him. "Lord, help me!" she said.*
>
> *26 He replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."*
>
> *27 "Yes it is, Lord," she said. "Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."*
>
> *28 Then Jesus said to her, "Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted." And her daughter was healed at that moment.*

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

The woman moved closer. She knelt before Jesus and reduced her whole need to three words: "Lord, help me." There was no performance and no long defence. Her prayer was worshipful, humble and direct.

Then came the difficult image of the children's bread and the dogs. Pastor Louis said she clearly understood the distinction. She knew who was being described as a child and who was being described as outside. Yet she did not become offended and walk away. She answered, "Yes, Lord," and continued to trust His mercy.

Her response is not a denial of her dignity. It is a refusal to argue herself away from Jesus. She does not claim that her background entitles her to anything. She simply believes that His goodness is greater than the boundary in front of her.

Pastor Louis said that, for a long time, he understood the healing as proof that even the crumbs of God are powerful. There is truth in the instinct: nothing that comes from God is powerless. But the sermon was moving toward something even greater. Before that turning point, it paused to honour the woman's faith.

Jesus called it great faith. It kept crying when others wanted silence. It kept kneeling when the answer was difficult. It agreed that Jesus was Lord and still asked for help. It trusted His character more than it trusted the visible circumstances.

I need that kind of faith. I often want prayer to be answered quickly and explained clearly. When it is not, I can become defensive, offended or discouraged. The woman teaches me to remain at His feet. “Lord, help me” is not a weak prayer when it is directed to the right Lord.

THREE QUESTIONS TO HELP ME REMEMBER

1	What short prayer did the woman make when she knelt before Jesus?
2	How did she respond to the image of the children's bread and the dogs?
3	What qualities in her response led Jesus to call her faith great?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, help me. Give me faith that remains at Your feet when I do not understand the delay, the difficulty or the words before me. Keep my heart humble, persistent and confident in Your mercy. Amen.

CARRY THIS WITH ME TODAY

Great faith keeps kneeling, keeps asking and keeps trusting Jesus.

DAY 5

No Longer Living on Crumbs

YESTERDAY IN ONE MINUTE

Yesterday I saw the woman kneel and pray, "Lord, help me." She accepted the difficult moment without leaving Jesus and continued to trust His mercy. Jesus called her faith great and answered her request. Today we come to the sermon's central turning point: Pastor Louis moved from the idea of powerful crumbs to the greater truth that Jesus brings outsiders to the table as children.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

John 6:32-35 (NIV)

32 Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

34 "Sir," they said, "always give us this bread."

35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

DEVOTIONAL REFLECTION

Pastor Louis described a correction God brought to his understanding of the passage. He had thought the woman's daughter was healed by crumbs falling from the Lord's table. Then came the stronger insight: "Nobody is cured by crumbs." Jesus did more than allow an outsider to collect leftovers. He lifted her from the ground and brought her into the place of a daughter.

The sermon used the word "promotion." The woman came carrying the identity others had placed on her, but Jesus responded to her great faith and gave her the children's bread.

The healing was not presented as a dog receiving a lucky scrap; it became a picture of someone welcomed to the table.

This is the heart of the message: “You do not need to be a dog. You do not need to eat crumbs. You can be His child. You can sit at the table.” Jesus is not the crumbs of heaven. He is the Bread of Life.

I can still live with a crumbs mentality. I can approach God as though I must persuade Him to notice me, remain at a distance because of shame, or be satisfied with occasional spiritual leftovers while refusing the relationship He offers. I may know Christian language and still think like an outsider.

But the gospel does not merely give me a small benefit from Jesus. It gives me Jesus Himself. The Bread of Life is not a token blessing added to my life; He is the One who satisfies, sustains and gives life.

Pastor Louis said that what I ask of Him, I do not ask as a dog but as a child. This does not make prayer demanding or entitled. A child still comes dependent on the Father's goodness. The difference is that the child knows where home is and knows there is a place at the table.

THREE QUESTIONS TO HELP ME REMEMBER

1	What earlier understanding of the crumbs did Pastor Louis say God corrected?
2	What did he mean when he said Jesus “promoted” the woman?
3	What is the difference between approaching God with entitlement and approaching Him as a dependent child?

PRAYER

Father, forgive me for living at a distance when You have invited me near. Deliver me from shame, fear and the habit of settling for spiritual crumbs. Teach me to receive Jesus Himself as the Bread of Life and to pray with the humble confidence of Your child. Amen.

CARRY THIS WITH ME TODAY

You do not need to eat crumbs; take your place as a child at the Lord's table.

DAY 6

Fed by the Bread of Life

YESTERDAY IN ONE MINUTE

Yesterday the sermon reached its central declaration: Jesus did not leave the woman beneath the table searching for crumbs. He brought her into the dignity of a child and gave her the children's bread. I was reminded that Jesus is not a small spiritual addition to life; He is the Bread of Life. Today the whole sermon comes together in the invitation to trust Him fully and take my place at His table.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE

> **John 6:35 and John 4:13-14 (NIV)**
>
> *John 6:35 - Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."*
>
> *John 4:13-14 - Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*

THE WHOLE SERMON IN ONE FINAL REFLECTION

The sermon began with gratitude: gratitude for prayer, hospitality and partnership in the gospel across nations and languages. Pastor Louis assured the church that God had heard its prayers. That opening already pointed to the message that followed - God hears people who call to Him.

He then opened Matthew 15 and placed before us a Canaanite woman crying for her daughter. Before explaining her story, he shared his own. He once believed he had no testimony because he had been kept in church while others had dramatic stories of deliverance. God showed him that the same love, blood, cross and sacrifice that rescued others had preserved him. Grace had not passed him by; grace had kept him.

From there the sermon turned to faith. Jesus perceives faith and unbelief. The centurion and the Canaanite woman were both outsiders, yet they believed the answer was in Him. The woman continued when the disciples wanted her silenced. She continued when Jesus did not answer immediately. She knelt and prayed, “Lord, help me.” She continued even when the language of children, dogs, bread and crumbs made the distance between her and Israel painfully clear.

Jesus called her faith great and answered her cry. But Pastor Louis took the message further. He had once thought the miracle showed the power of crumbs. Then he saw the greater picture: Jesus was not keeping her beneath the table. He was lifting her into the place of a daughter. “Nobody is cured by crumbs.” The cure was in the children's bread, and Jesus Himself is the Bread of Life.

The warning is that I can be content with crumbs. I can undervalue preserving grace, allow other people to define my access to Jesus, give up when prayer is delayed, or continue living with the identity of an outsider. The invitation is to trust Him fully. I come humbly, but I do not remain far away. I come dependent, but I come as one He welcomes.

The sermon ended with a direct call: “Take your place this morning as a child at the table of your Lord.” Jesus gives bread that truly satisfies and living water that ends the deepest thirst. The question to carry beyond this week is not whether a crumb from God could help me. It is whether I will receive the life He gives and live from the place He has opened for me.

THREE QUESTIONS TO HELP ME REMEMBER THE WHOLE SERMON

1	What central contrast did the sermon make between crumbs beneath the table and the children's bread at the table?
2	How did Pastor Louis connect preserving grace, persistent faith and the woman's new place as a daughter?

3	What invitation and question should I carry with me after these six days?

FINAL PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for hearing our cries and for the grace that rescues, preserves and brings us near. Increase my faith when I am weak. Keep me praying when the answer seems delayed. Forgive me when I live as though I am still an outsider or settle for crumbs when You offer Yourself as the Bread of Life. Teach me to take my place humbly and confidently as Your child, to receive Your living water, and to carry Your life into the week ahead. Amen.

THE THOUGHT TO KEEP AFTER THE SIX DAYS

I am not called to live beneath the table; in Christ I am welcomed as a child and fed by the Bread of Life.