

Background to scripture readings for July

Sunday July 3

Isaiah 32:1-5, 16-18 In a society that reflects God's hopes and dreams for life on this planet, there will be righteousness as people live in a right relationship with God, with each other and with all creation.

Colossians 3: 12-17 Righteousness means that our relationships with each are marked by things like compassion, kindness, humility, patience, forgiveness and love.

John 15: 12-17 Jesus' new commandment is that we are to love one another as he loves us. He tells us that our work as his church is to bear fruit that will last.

Sunday July 10

Amos 7:7-17 During a time of prosperity, the people of Israel have become religiously and socially corrupt. God shows the prophet Amos how much they fail to measure up to God's ways.

Colossians 1:1-14 Paul begins his letter with a prayer of thanksgiving and intercession. The church is growing throughout the Roman Empire.

Luke 10:25-37 Jesus has sent 70 disciples out to proclaim the nearness of God's Kingdom. They have returned and reported their success. Now a lawyer challenges Jesus with the question, "Who can inherit eternal life?"

Sunday July 17

Amos 8:1-12 God threatens to punish the Israelites for fraudulent business practices which particularly affect the poor and needy.

Colossians 1:15-28 The Christians of Colossae hear of Christ, in whom the entirety of God resides, who draws all things together, and who is the head of all creation.

Luke 10:38-42 In Jesus' day, to sit at someone's feet was to be his disciple. Jesus praises Mary and also values Martha.

Sunday July 24

Hosea 1:2-10

The people of Israel have taken up worshipping other gods. Their covenant with God is compared to a marriage contract which they have broken by wandering off from God.

Colossians 2:6-15

Some Christians at Colossae have tried to merge Christianity with other religions. All power comes from Christ, so seeking power in other traditions is a futile exercise.

Luke 11:1-13

Christians have a distinctive way of praying. We address God personally as “Father”--a caring, gracious and loving parent. The Church traditionally uses Matthew’s version of the Lord’s Prayer.

Sunday July 31

Hosea 11:1-11

Hosea has told of the northern kingdom (Israel) turning away from God’s ways and his covenant with them. Now he foretells their exile to Assyria.

Colossians 3:1-11

The author writes about the ethical implications of being a member of the baptised community.

Luke 12:13-21

Jesus instructs a large crowd and his disciples about the importance of a proper relationship with God. No one should selfishly amass wealth to the exclusion of spirituality.

Sunday August 7

Isaiah 1:1,10-20 Judah, the southern kingdom, has been invaded by the Assyrian army. Isaiah interprets Judah’s woes as God’s judgment on her rulers and people.

Hebrews 11:1-3,8-16 Faith gives substance to our hopes and convinces us of the realities we do not see. The author gives examples of Old Testament figures who had great faith.

Luke 12:32-40 Having told the story of the farmer who allowed wealth to replace God in his life, Jesus has said that striving for the kingdom is more important than acquiring material goods. Now he gives two examples of this striving.