

Lectionary Bible Study

For Sunday, August 16, 2026 (Pentecost 12)

Isaiah 56:1, 6-8

Discussion Starters

1. In light of the coming deliverance (55:12), what type of lifestyle ought to characterize the exiles?
2. What is God's purpose in restoring Jerusalem (see especially vv. 7-8)?
3. What does it mean to "maintain justice?" What kind of justice is God talking about?
4. Try imagining our congregation from the vantage point of someone from a totally different background or culture. What "insider" practices or beliefs might prevent outsiders from seeing this building as a place to meet God?
5. How might these verses apply to our world today?

Romans 11:1-2, 29-32

Discussion Starters

1. Has God rejected the people of Israel? Are they still the "chosen people?"
2. What does it mean that God's call and gifts are "irrevocable?"
3. What differences does Paul point out between the Jews and Christians?
4. Why does God allow people to be disobedient?

Matthew 15:10-28

Discussion Starters

1. Define "unclean." How did the Jews understand that word, and how was their understanding different from what Jesus taught here?
2. Why were the Pharisees offended at the teaching of Jesus? Why were the disciples confused by it?
3. Why did Jesus keep silent (and then become somewhat rude) when the woman began to talk to Him?
4. How would you describe the response of the disciples, especially in light of the teaching earlier in this reading?
5. What about the woman's final response made it "great faith?"

WRAP UP

What key insight did you gain from this Bible study? How might it make a difference in how you live today?