

# GRACEPOINT CHURCH

## Weekly Devotional

**Unshakeable: The Prophet of Justice**  
**Social Justice Month**  
**July 2026**

**The Cost of Justice – Paul Verryn – 08h15 – 5.7.2026 and**  
**A Severe Mercy – Paul Verryn – 10h00 – 5.7.2026 (see below)**

### Scripture

Jeremiah 2:1-13; Psalm 145:8-15; Romans 7:15-25; Matthew 11:16-19; 28-30

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God's word to you.

Spend some time in worship.

### Observation

#### 08h15 service

#### *Jeremiah 2:1-13*

Most of Jeremiah's prophecies were delivered to Jerusalem and Judah. The northern tribes of Israel had fallen some 100 years before, and so God referred to the remaining portion of His people as Israel. Members of each tribe who followed Him now lived in Judah. God reminded the people of the wonderful relationship they used to have with Him. They had loved and trusted God as they journeyed through the wilderness, even though their relationship had not been perfect. But it was far better than it was in Jeremiah's day. God had protected them at that time.

God asked Israel to tell Him what fault there was in Him that had caused them to follow false gods. He had brought them into a fertile land, but they had tarnished it and made it an abomination through their idolatry. The religious leaders had not questioned their behaviour, and the rulers of the land had also worshipped idols. As a result, God would lay charges against them. Even the nations did not change their own gods, but God's people had changed their God from the God of glory to worthless idols who did nothing for them. It was astonishing that they had forsaken God, who was the source of fresh, living water and carved cisterns for themselves that could not even store brackish, stagnant water

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PBO Reg. No. 18/11/13/690

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Tel: 011 702 4600 Emergency no.: 076 498 2088 WhatsApp Connect: 071 892 9382 E-mail: [info@gracepoint.co.za](mailto:info@gracepoint.co.za)

P.O. Box 1408, Lonehill 2062. 125 Duncan Road, Glenferness, 2191

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### *Psalm 145:8-15*

The psalmist declares God's own description of Himself that He gave to Moses. God is merciful and gracious to all humankind. His goodness and greatness were demonstrated in both creation and in God's unfolding plan, for all creation praises Him and reveals His glory and great power to His people who would share this awareness with all people. The psalmist continued that God's kingdom will last forever. He shows compassion to all who fall into sin, and He will draw them close to Him when they repent. He provides for all who love and follow Him.

### *Romans 7:15-25*

Paul speaks of the struggle Christ-followers have in being obedient in their own strength. They know what is right and want to do it but lack the power to do so. He acknowledges that he is a new man in Christ but has no power to resist sin in his own strength. This struggle is common to all Christ-followers. They want to please God and follow Him, but their human nature pulls them away, back to their old ways. It is beyond them to continually resist the pull of sin. In desperation, Paul asks who will deliver him from this burden he drags around with him. He looks beyond himself to Jesus. Jesus is the bridge between his old nature and God. He thanks God that, through Jesus, he can have victory over his old self. Jesus is his Saviour.

### *Matthew 11:16-19*

Jesus looks at the current generation of His day. They picked and chose whom they would follow from among the prophets. Whether the message the prophets gave brought joy or sorrow, the people did not respond. They were not happy with either the way John the Baptist delivered his message of repentance or the way Jesus delivered His message of the kingdom of heaven. They would neither mourn nor dance.

### *Matthew 11:28-30*

Jesus issued His invitation to everyone. 'Come.' He invited anyone who felt burdened by the challenges of life to take His yoke upon them. A yoke was used to guide an animal, and it was tailor-made for that animal, so it was comfortable to wear. It was a term used by the Jews to express obligation to God. But Jesus was not offering the yoke of the law or command. He was offering them a way to learn from Him. It was His yoke He offered – and when people took it up, they would find it was easy and light compared to other yokes, as long as they did not rebel against it, and as long as they did not add any further burdens of their own choice to it. Jesus described Himself as gentle and lowly of heart – He would be the one who would bear the

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people's burdens. Those who chose His way would find peace. The yoke Jesus offered was tailor-made to fit the individual as they followed Christ.

### *Icebreaker:*

What has given you the greatest joy as you follow Jesus?  
Why has that been special to you?

### **Application**

- How important is justice to you in your relationships with others? How do you exercise justice in your family, work environment, socially, in your church?
- What is the cost of justice for you, personally? Explain.
- *Accountability:* What can you do to live out your accountability for justice in South Africa today? Do you think you can make a difference? Why/why not? Will you try anyway? Why is it important to do so?
- *Struggle to discern truth:* How do you discern truth? What is the difference between truth and facts? What role do you invite Jesus to play in your discernment? How does He help you?
- *Forgiveness:* How can you change the current situation in the country by loving others? How would welcoming the stranger in your life make a difference? What can you do to welcome strangers this week – as a group – as an individual?
- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

### **Prayer**

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time, and in regard to other needs of the group.

### **Service**

Be aware of and welcome strangers amongst you in your community this week. What difference does this make for your relationships with them?



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**A Severe Mercy – Paul Verryn – 10h00 – 5.7.2026**

### Scripture

Micah 6:3-4; Psalm 145:8-15; Romans 7:15-25; Luke 18:31-19:10

Open your mind and heart as you read the passage of Scripture aloud and then again quietly to yourself. Listen for God's word to you.

Spend some time in worship.

*Micah 6:3-4*

Through the prophet Micah, God asked His people what He had done to them, so that they had grown tired of Him. He reminded them He had rescued them from Egypt and saved them from slavery. Yet they rebelled against Him.

*Psalm 145:8-14* as above

*Romans 7:15-25* as above

*Luke 18:31-43*

Jesus told His disciples they were going to Jerusalem. It was the time of Passover, and it was the Jewish custom to go to the city for the feast. He said that everything written about the Son of Man would happen during this visit. He reminded His disciples what would happen. He would undergo great suffering there when He was handed over to the Gentiles, who would humiliate and mock Him, scourge Him and kill Him. On the third day, He would rise again from death. The disciples did not understand any of this, for God had not yet revealed it to them.

On the way into the city, a blind man, who could hear the crowd passing him, called out when he was told Jesus was passing. When people told him to be quiet, he cried out even more loudly, desperate to get Jesus' attention. He asked Jesus to have mercy on him. Jesus heard him and stopped. The blind man asked Him to enable him to see. Jesus granted his request, commenting on the fact that it was his faith that had healed him. The man glorified God and followed Jesus.

*Luke 19:1-10*

Jericho was a rich city, exporting dates and balsam around the Roman world. Zaccheus was the chief tax collector of the area. Tax collectors were hated for they raised the taxes as much as they could and kept whatever extra they made for themselves. Zaccheus was a short man, but he longed to see Jesus. He ran ahead and climbed a tree so he would be able to see Him

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over the heads of the crowd. At this time, he did not mind being ridiculed by the crowd. Jesus saw him and called him by name, telling him that He would eat in Zaccheaus' house that day.

Zacchaeus was delighted and climbed down the tree, eager to welcome Jesus to his home. The people grumbled that Jesus would be eating with a known sinner. But Zacchaeus recognized his wrongdoing in the presence of Jesus and promised to put things right. He knew he had to repent and repay everyone he had wronged. Jesus, recognizing Zacchaeus' changed heart, told everyone that salvation had come into the tax collector's home on that day. He affirmed Zacchaeus as a true Jew (a son of Abraham) and told the people around Him that this was why He had come – to seek and extend friendship with notorious sinners like Zacchaeus.

### Icebreaker:

When have you found it difficult to be just?

How did you manage the situation?

What was the outcome?

### Application

- How do you deal with people that society shuns? How do you feel about your response? What difference could you make by responding to such people with the merciful justice Jesus encourages?
- *Mercy does not compromise justice:* How would you respond to someone who said 'I can continue with my (sinful) behavior, because God is merciful and will forgive me whenever I repent'? How would you explain 'severe mercy' to them?
- *Light is merciful – it sets us free:* Spend some time in silence, considering the dark places in your life? How would God's light change things? Share how you feel about inviting God to shine His light into such places in your life and being able to begin to deal with them<sup>1</sup>.
- Are you ever aware of wearing a 'Christian' mask to hide what's really going on inside you? Why do you do that? What difference does it make to your relationships with others – and with God? Discuss these thoughts – are you willing to take off your mask and be real before God and others? Why/why not?

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<sup>1</sup> You do not have to share what those dark places are. Speak to one another or to a minister at the church if you wish to make a confession in this regard.

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- How can the group help you with the struggles you have mentioned during this session?

### Prayer

Pray for one another in regard to the issues that have been raised during your discussion time, and in regard to other needs of the group.

### Service

Consider making any reparation for injustices you have caused that you have become aware of as a result of this discussion.

### Bibliography

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