

SABBATH FLOW

Cascading the Sabbath into the Week Ahead

“Drawn into the Kingdom” sermon, May 2, 2026, Auburn SDA Ch. For
May 3-9. Sermon and guide by Pastor Mel Baga, D.Min.

Daily Devotional Guide

Luke 16:16 says that since John, “the good news of the kingdom of God is proclaimed, and everyone tries to enter it by force.” Jesus describes a strange urgency: people pressing into the kingdom because the gospel sounded like news too good to remain outside. This week, we will pray through what it means to press in: to climb down from self-justification, enter the story we were made to belong to, respond to the kingdom as breaking news rather than background noise, and entrust our lives to the reign of Jesus.

because we believe what is being announced is worth getting in on.

The gospel of the kingdom is not background noise. It is the announcement that God’s reign has drawn near in Jesus and is still pressing into the present. Today, ask where the kingdom is addressing your life now.

Pray: Jesus, help me hear Your kingdom as good news today. Do not let Your gospel become background noise in my life. Amen.

SUNDAY

News Worth Moving For

“The good news of the kingdom of God is proclaimed.”

Read: Luke 16:16

Reflect: Some news does not leave us where we are. It moves us. It makes us rearrange our priorities

MONDAY

Climb Down

“You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of others.”

Read: Luke 16:14–15

Reflect: The Pharisees stood above Jesus’ message. They evaluated, ridiculed, and justified themselves. But Jesus said God knew their hearts.

Pressing into the kingdom begins by climbing down from the place where we defend ourselves, manage appearances, or keep control. The kingdom cannot be entered from above. We come low, honest, and ready to be told the truth by grace.

Pray: Lord, show me where I am justifying myself. Help me climb down from pride and receive the truth of Your reign. Amen.

TUESDAY

The Story We Belong To

"The Law and the Prophets were in effect until John came."

Read: Luke 16:16; Mark 1:14–15

Reflect: The kingdom did not appear out of nowhere. Jesus announced the fulfillment of the story God had been telling through Israel: promise, covenant, longing, prophecy, and hope.

Scripture is not merely background information. It is the story we were made to belong to. In Jesus, God's long story opens and calls us home.

Pray: Father, help me see my life inside Your story. Let Scripture become more than information to me; let it become home. Amen.

WEDNESDAY

Breaking News, Not Background Noise

"The kingdom of God has come near."

Read: Mark 1:14–15

Reflect: The gospel is not only that something happened long ago. It is that God's reign has drawn near in Jesus and is still breaking into the present.

The kingdom keeps addressing our fears, habits, relationships, wounds, loyalties, and hopes. Today, listen for where the gospel is not old news but breaking news.

Pray: Jesus, let Your kingdom break into my here and now. Address what I have ignored, awaken what has grown numb, and call me deeper into Your reign. Amen

THURSDAY

Repentance Keeps Turning

"Repent."

Read: Mark 1:14–15

Reflect: Repentance is not only how we begin the Christian life. It is the daily turning of our lives toward the reign of God.

We turn from whatever organizes us apart from Jesus: fear, control, money, status, resentment, self-protection, distraction, or shame. Repentance is not despair. It is the grace of being called back to the King who is near.

Pray: Lord, turn me again toward

You. Show me what has been ruling me, and draw me back under Your loving reign. Amen.

FRIDAY

Believe the Good News

"The first fruits of those who have died."

Read: Mark 1:14–15; John 15:4–5

Reflect: Belief is not mere mental agreement with correct doctrines. Doctrine matters, but belief is deeper than doctrinism. To believe the gospel is to entrust ourselves to Jesus moment by moment.

Belief means abiding with Christ, sensing His nearness, and letting His reign carry the weight of our lives. Today, bring one burden under His rule.

Pray: Jesus, I entrust myself to You again. Teach me to abide with You and let Your reign carry what I cannot carry myself. Amen.

SABBATH

Press In

"Everyone tries to enter it by force."

Read: eLuke 16:16; Philippians 3:12–14

Reflect: The gospel never becomes old news. It keeps breaking into our lives daily, moment by moment.

The kingdom keeps drawing us deeper.

We do not saunter back when we realize the King has come looking for us. We press in like our lives depend on it, because they do. We climb down, enter the story, respond to the news, and entrust ourselves to Jesus.

Pray: King Jesus, draw me into Your kingdom today. Help me press in with my whole life. Amen. 🙏

Group Study Guide

This week's sermon centered on Luke 16:16, where Jesus says that the kingdom of God is being proclaimed as good news and people are pressing into it with urgency. That urgency can sound strange to us, especially when the gospel has become familiar. This guide invites your group to explore what it means to hear the kingdom as breaking news and to press into it by climbing down, entering, responding, and entrusting.

Pray: Begin by asking God to make the gospel fresh again—not new because it has changed, but new because His reign is still breaking into the present.

Read: Luke 16:14–17; Mark 1:14–15

Discuss: Pick as many as time allows.

1. What stands out to you in Luke 16:16? What feels strange, surprising, or compelling about Jesus' language?
2. Why do you think people will line up, wait, or rearrange their lives when they believe certain news is worth getting in on?
3. The sermon asked, "Why does the gospel rarely feel that urgent to us?" How would you answer that honestly?
4. In Luke 16:14–15, the Pharisees ridicule Jesus and

justify themselves before others. What are some ways religious people today can stand above the gospel instead of pressing into it?

5. Luke says, "The Law and the Prophets were in effect until John came." How does it change the way we hear the gospel when we realize it is part of the long story God has been telling all along?
6. Mark 1:14–15 says, "Repent, and believe in the good news." How have you understood repentance in the past? How does it change things to see repentance as constant turning toward God's reign?
7. Where is the kingdom breaking into your here and now—your habits, relationships, fears, work, money, wounds, or hopes?

Reflect: Complete the following sentences: I need to climb down from... I need to enter more deeply into... I need to hear the kingdom as breaking news in... I need to entrust to Jesus...

Pray: Lord, help us climb down from self-justification. Help us enter the story we were made to belong to. Help us respond to Your kingdom as breaking news. Help us entrust the weight of our lives to the reign of Jesus. Amen. 🍷