



JUNE 7, 2026 · SUNDAY SERVICE

God's deepest desire

"I desire mercy, not sacrifice" · Matt 9:13

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Knowing God is a lot like knowing a person: we often approach him with the wrong ideas, simply for lack of experience. So I want to share a look at one of God's deepest desires, the one we sometimes find hard to believe: simply to be with us.

Thesis

One of God's deepest desires is to be with us, and the clearest proof of that desire is the incarnation of Jesus.

Main points

- God is wholly other: he does not need us and has always existed, and yet his deepest desire is to be with us.
- Israel got confused about that desire three times —politically, economically, and in the pride of thinking it deserved God— and lost the blessing of being with him.
- Through the prophet Joel, God asks for something deeper than religious display: "Rend your heart and not your garments."
- The incarnation of Jesus is the most tangible proof that God wants to be with us: he made himself small, emptied himself, and became one of us.
- At the table with sinners, Jesus risks his reputation —"I desire mercy, not sacrifice"— and invites us to let God love us the way he wants.

Key quotes

One of God's deepest desires is simply to be with us.

It is a great illusion to think that someday we could be fine without God.

Scripture references

- Joel 2:13 (NIV)
- Matthew 9:12-13 (NIV)
- Hebrews 12:1-2 (NIV)

Closing

It would be an enormous sadness for God to be standing there with open arms while we are distracted by other things —things that bring neither well-being nor fullness. This week, let us fix our eyes on Jesus —the most tangible sign that God wants to be with us— and let go of a certain insistence on solving everything on our own, so that God can embrace us and love us the way he wants.