SANCTUARY, SABBATH, SHALOM

First Presbyterian Church of Bakersfield
2026 Sept-Nov Sermon Series Study Guide

Isaiah 55:1-12 (NIV)

"Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.
2 Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labor on what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and you will delight in the richest of fare.
3 Give ear and come to me;
listen, that you may live.
I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
my faithful love promised to David.
4 See, I have made him a witness to the peoples,
a ruler and commander of the peoples.
5 Surely you will summon nations you know not,
and nations you do not know will come running to you,
because of the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel,
for he has endowed you with splendor."
6 Seek the Lord while he may be found;
call on him while he is near.
7 Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the unrighteous their thoughts.
Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them,
and to our God, for he will freely pardon.
8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,"
declares the Lord.
9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.
10 As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,
11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth:
It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish what I desire
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.
12 You will go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and hills
will burst into song before you,
and all the trees of the field
will clap their hands.

Shalom: The Joy of the Christian Life

OPEN

- What are you hoping will bring you joy this holiday season?
- Background: Isaiah 53 tells about the future suffering servant whose death pays for the free gift of life. In chapter 54, God invites Israel to move back into the relationship with him because of the servant's sacrifice.
- Read Isaiah 55:1-12.

STUDY

- There are several invitations made in the first seven verses. Make a list of each invitation, to whom each invitation is given and what, if any, conditions exist for it? Talk about what you think each one means.
- What are the modern-day equivalents of spending money on "what is not bread" and laboring for "what does not satisfy" in your life?
- What are the hopes God has for his people? What has he done to make way for these hopes to become reality?
- In verses 8-11, how does God describe the difference between his people and himself?
- How does the promise in verses 10-11 change the way you read scripture, pray, or share your faith with others?
- Describe in your own words, the image in verse 12. How is this an appropriate response to God's invitations, actions, power, and provision?
- How do you see shalom in this passage? Why would this message and hope of shalom be especially helpful to an audience facing exile and brokenness?
- How is this message of joy-producing shalom helpful for us today— personally and as a church community?

PRAY

- Pray in adoration of this shalom producing God! End the prayer time by reading verse 12 aloud together.