

Sermon Proper 5A 2026 (NOTES)

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[https://lectionarypage.net/YearA\\_RCL/Pentecost/AProp5\\_RCL.html](https://lectionarypage.net/YearA_RCL/Pentecost/AProp5_RCL.html) (Track 2)

## **INTRO**

***Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'* (JESUS)**

Jesus words in today's Gospel are actually a quote from prophet the Hosea ( the last verse of today's first lesson)

***For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings."* (HOSEA)**

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**ZOOM IN: Word Study**

**ZOOM OUT:**

- **This pericope**—calling of Matthew & "Jesus eats w/tax collectors and sinners"
- **Matthew's Gospel:** Jesus in New Moses; "I have not come to abolish..."; MORE DEMANDING
- **Ch. 8-10**

## **CONCLUSION**

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Hear Jesus saying to each one of us:

***Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'***

**Not sure how to start?**

**Then come, follow me. Like my friend, Matthew**

**You'll learn what I mean as you do what I do. Amen.**

***Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'* (JESUS)**

**Where do we start?**

**ZOOM IN WORD STUDY**

## **SACRIFICE**

Hebrew: **Olah** or **Zebach**—sacrifice of a life—burnt or slaughtered as an offering to God

Greek: **Thusia**—likewise a sacrificial act or victim

## **MERCY**

Hebrew **chesed**: **Lovingkindness, mercy, steadfast love, loyalty, faithfulness, goodness**

Greek **eleos**: **Mercy, compassion, pity**

***Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'* (JESUS)**

For both Jesus and Hosea, God's rejection of "sacrifice & burnt offerings" is tied to God's demand for ethical conduct and community care, and God's rejection of **unnecessary violence and loss of life** (as well as God's disdain for **empty rituals and "performative" religion...**)

Straightforward, biblically based ethical framework for daily life AND public policy (not to mention worship) that you'd think Jews & Christians, at the very least, for starters, should be able to understand and agree upon.

No to burnt offerings. No to sacrificial victims. No to senseless slaughter. Yes to mercy. Yes to lovingkindness. Yes to compassion. And for heaven's sake, don't try to impress me by making a show of how "righteous" and "religious" you are.

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***For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings."* (HOSEA)**

***Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'* (JESUS)**

## **ZOOM OUT: PERICOPE**

***'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'*** In today's Gospel, this verse appears in the context of **the** STORY of Calling of Matthew, a tax collector, to be a disciple which provides the occasion for controversy among the religious leaders about Jesus eating "with tax collectors and sinners"

**The religious leaders in the Gospels regularly accuse Jesus of teaching and practicing some watered down, lax version of Judaism. (Just like some religious leaders of our own day might accuse more inclusive branches of the Christian Family Tree, like ours, of teaching some**

**watered down, lax version of Christianity. “This man eats with tax collectors and sinners!” does not sound all that far off from “That church listens to women and queer people!”)**

### **ZOOM OUT: WHOLE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW**

Matthew’s Gospel counters the criticism that Jesus is a “bad Jew” by repeatedly portraying Jesus as the New Moses—the ultimate Good Jew.

For Matthew, Jesus is the New Moses

The Sermon on the Mount is Torah 2.0

The Beatitudes are The 10 Commandments with Updates

In Matthew, Jesus himself answers the criticism of religious leaders directly, saying:

- ***Do not think I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish, but to fulfill.***

When Jesus says: ***Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’*** He is not letting anyone off the hook. Jesus is almost certainly commanding his followers—commanding us—to something deeper, broader, more demanding—than what religious law requires.

Yes, of course God desires more for his Children than the mindless repetition of empty ritual and performative religion.

Yes of course, and what else?

Yes, of course God desires more for his Children than violence, and sacrifice, and scapegoating and death and destruction.

Yes of course, and what else?

For starters, I think Matthew’s Gospel suggests, that What God desires for his Children, more than sacrifice, more than ANYTHING, is HEALING.

### **Zoom OUT: CHAPTERS 8-10**

***Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’*** In Matthew’s Gospel, This Verse, is cradled in the context of a long series of healing stories.

If we just read through the section headings, beginning in Matthew 8 and continuing through the beginning of Chapter 10 we’ll find:

- **Jesus cleanses a leper**
- **Jesus heals a centurion’s servant**

- Jesus heals many at peter's house
- Jesus heals the gadarene demoniac
- Jesus heals a paralytic
- (Today's Gospel) JESUS CALLS MATTHEW & DINES with TAX COLLECTORS AND SINNERS
- Jesus raises a dead girl to life
- Jesus heals a bleeding woman
- Jesus heals to blind men
- Jesus heals one who is mute
- (Then finally) JESUS CALLS THE TWELVE & SENDS THEM OUT TO SHARE IN THE WORK OF TEACHING & HEALING & PROCLAIMING GOOD NEWS

***Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' (JESUS)***

It's as if Jesus is saying "If you can't understand my words, can you at least understand my actions?"

### **CONCLUSION**

Mercy means healing lepers and servants and foreigners and mothers-in-law, and people possessed by demons. Mercy means forgiving sinners, and enabling movement where there is paralysis, and restoring the dead to life, and putting an end to an apparently endless flow of blood, giving sight to the blind and restoring a voice to the voiceless, and breaking bread with outcasts and sinners, and inviting unlikely people to share with you in God's work.

***Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' (JESUS)***

I desire forgiveness. I desire healing. I desire breaking bread at a table where everyone is welcome. I desire your help in proclaiming and bringing forth God's Kingdom— where ALL Life can flourish, where everyone belongs.

Hear Jesus saying to each one of us:

***Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'***

**Not sure how to start?**

**Then come, follow me. Like my friend, Matthew**

**You'll learn what I mean as you do what I do. Amen.**

## Hosea 5:15-6:6

Thus says the Lord: “I will return again to my place **until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face**. In their distress they will beg my favor: ‘Come, let us return to the Lord; for it is he who has torn, and he will heal us; he has struck down, and he will bind us up. After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. Let us know, let us press on to know the Lord; his appearing is as sure as the dawn; he will come to us like the showers, like the spring rains that water the earth.’ What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? Your love is like a morning cloud, like the dew that goes away early. Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets, I have killed them by the words of my mouth, and my judgment goes forth as the light. **For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.**”

## Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, “Follow me.”

And he got up and followed him. And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. **Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’** For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”

5930 [e]	430 [e]	1847 [e]	2077 [e]	3808 [e]	2654 [e]	2617 [e]	3588 [e]
mê·'ō·lō·wṭ.	'ě·lō·hîm	wə·ḡa·'at	zā·ḡah;	wə·lō-	ḡā·ḡaṣ·tî	ḡe·seḡ	kî
מַעֲלוֹת:	אֱלֹהִים	וְדָעַת	זָבַח	וְלֹא-	תִפְצְאִי	חַסְדִּי	כִּי 6
above burnt offerings	of God	and the knowledge	sacrifice	and not	I delight	mercy	For
Prep-m   N-fp	N-mp	Conj-w   N-fsc	N-ms	Conj-w   Adv-NegPrt	V-Qal-Perf-1cs	N-ms	Conj

4198 [e]	1161 [e]	3129 [e]	5101 [e]	1510 [e]	1656 [e]	2309 [e]	2532 [e]	3756 [e]	2378 [e]	3756 [e]	1063 [e]	2064 [e]
poreuthentes	de	mathete	ti	estin	Eleos	thelō	kai	ou	thysian	ou	gar	ēlthon
13 πορευθέντες	δὲ ,	μάθετε	τί	ἐστίν ,	Ἔλεος	θέλω ,	καὶ	οὐ	θυσίαν :	οὐ	γὰρ	ἦλθον
having gone	however	learn	what	is	Mercy	I desire	and	not	sacrifice	not	for	I came
V-APP-NMP	Conj	V-AMA-2P	IPro-NNS	V-PIA-3S	N-ANS	V-PIA-1S	Conj	Adv	N-AFS	Adv	Conj	V-AIA-1S

Strong's Greek 1342: righteous [ones]

2564 [e]	1342 [e]	235 [e]	268 [e]
kalesai	dikaious	alla	hamartōlous
καλέσαι	δικαίους ,	ἀλλὰ	ἁμαρτωλούς .
to call	[the] righteous	but	sinners
V-ANA	Adj-AMP	Conj	Adj-AMP

## “Mercy not sacrifice”

Hebrew (Hosea)

**cheched: Lovingkindness, mercy, steadfast love, loyalty, faithfulness, goodness**

**Original Word:** תֹּחַן

**Part of Speech:** Noun Masculine

**Transliteration:** cheched

**Pronunciation:** kheh'-sed

**Phonetic Spelling:** (kheh'-sed)

**KJV:** favour, good deed(-liness, -ness), kindly, (loving-)kindness, merciful (kindness), mercy, pity, reproach, wicked thing

**Word Origin:** [from [H2616 \(תֹּחַן - To be kind\)](#)]

Greek (Matthew)

**eleos: Mercy, compassion, pity**

**Original Word:** ἔλεος

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Masculine; Noun, Neuter

**Transliteration:** eleos

**Pronunciation:** EL-eh-os

**Phonetic Spelling:** (el'-eh-os)

**KJV:** (+ tender) mercy

**NASB:** mercy, compassion

HEBREW

**olah: Burnt offering**

**Original Word:** עֹלָה

**Part of Speech:** Noun Feminine

**Transliteration:** `olah

**Pronunciation:** oh-LAH

**Phonetic Spelling:** (o-law')

**KJV:** ascent, burnt offering (sacrifice), go up to See also H5766

**zebach: sacrifice, sacrifices, offer**

**Original Word:** זָבַח

**Part of Speech:** Noun Masculine

**Transliteration:** zebach

**Pronunciation:** ZE-bakh

**Phonetic Spelling:** (zeh'-bakh)

**KJV:** offer(-ing), sacrifice

**NASB:** sacrifice, sacrifices, offer, feasting, sacrificial, slaughter

**Word Origin:** [from [H2076 \(זָבַח - sacrifice\)](#)]

1. (properly) a slaughter, i.e. the flesh of an animal
2. (by implication) a sacrifice (the victim or the act)

GREEK

**thusia: Sacrifice, offering**

**Original Word:** θυσία

**Part of Speech:** Noun, Feminine

**Transliteration:** thusia

**Pronunciation:** thoo-see'-ah

**Phonetic Spelling:** (thoo-see'-ah)

**KJV:** sacrifice

**NASB:** sacrifice, sacrifices

**Word Origin:** [from [G2380 \(θύω - kill\)](#)]

1. sacrifice (the act or the victim)  
{literally or figuratively}