

Bible Study # 1 : "Who Is My Neighbour?"

– Living the Heart of the Good Samaritan

Main Passage:

Luke 10:25–37 (The Parable of the Good Samaritan)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage believers to live out compassionate love.
 - Strengthen the local church in its mission to be a light in the community.
 - Challenge each person to examine their heart, biases, and call to action.
-

Opening Prayer

“Lord, open our hearts to Your Word. Challenge us to see with Your eyes, love with Your heart, and serve with Your hands. Teach us what it means to be a true neighbour. Amen.”

1. Read the Passage: Luke 10:25–37

Ask someone to read it aloud slowly. Then ask the group to sit in silence for a moment and reflect.

2. Context and Summary

Jesus tells this story in response to a religious expert who asks, **"What must I do to inherit eternal life?"** and then, seeking to justify himself, asks, **"And who is my neighbour?"**

In response, Jesus paints a powerful picture of love that crosses ethnic, religious, and social boundaries. The hero is not the priest or Levite—figures of religious authority—but a **Samaritan**, a cultural and spiritual outsider, who shows compassion and mercy.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. Compassion Beyond Convenience

- The priest and Levite likely had reasons not to stop (ritual purity, fear, inconvenience), but Jesus highlights the Samaritan's *interruptible* love.
 - **Reflection Question:** When has compassion been inconvenient for you? What keeps us from helping others?
 - **Quote:** *"You can always give without loving, but you can never love without giving."* — Amy Carmichael
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Philippians 2:4** – “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”
 - **James 2:15–17** – “If a brother or sister is poorly clothed... and you say, ‘Go in peace...’ but give them nothing...”
-

B. Love That Crosses Boundaries

- The Samaritan and the injured man may have been from opposing communities, yet compassion bridged the divide.
 - Jesus is calling His followers to love beyond comfort zones—across race, politics, class, and even into ‘enemy territory’.
 - **Reflection Question:** Who are the modern-day “Samaritans” in our community? Who do we struggle to love?
 - **Quote:** *"Our love to God is measured by our everyday fellowship with others and the love it displays."* — Andrew Murray
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Galatians 3:28** – “There is neither Jew nor Greek... for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
 - **1 John 4:20** – “Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar...”
-

C. Loving with Action, Not Just Words

- The Samaritan doesn't just feel compassion—he **acts**: bandages, lifts, pays. How might the Samaritan also be seen as a picture of Christ Jesus?
 - Love is not a feeling, but a decision expressed in tangible action.
 - **Reflection Question:** What are some practical ways we can “bandage the wounds” of our community?
 - **Quote:** *“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can... as long as ever you can.”* — John Wesley
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Micah 6:8** – “Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.”
 - **Matthew 25:40** – “Whatever you did for one of the least of these... you did for me.”
-

4. A Word to the Church: Becoming a “Good Samaritan Church”

This parable isn't just about individuals—it's a call for the *whole church* to embody this radical love – just as Jesus did and still does through His Spirit.

Challenge:

- Are we as a church known more for our compassion or our comfort?
- Do people in pain know they can find healing in our midst?
- Are we willing to be “interrupted” by the brokenness around us?

Group Discussion:

- What barriers do we as a church need to overcome to be more like the Samaritan and less like the *religious* ‘Levite’ or ‘Priest’?
 - What needs in our neighbourhood are we overlooking?
 - How can we create a culture where *mercy is our default*?
 - How might we embody Jesus more effectively?
-

5. A Call to Action: Go and Do Likewise

Jesus ends with a command: **“Go and do likewise.”** This isn't a suggestion. It's a commission.

Personal Application:

- Who is someone in need that God may be placing on your heart this week?
- What step will you take to show mercy?

Church-Wide Application:

- Brainstorm one initiative or outreach effort the church could begin or enhance or revive to embody ‘Good Samaritan’ love.
-

Closing Scripture Meditation

Isaiah 58:10–11 –

“If you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness...”

Final Prayer

“Lord, break our hearts for what breaks Yours. Help us to love without limits, to serve without seeking reward, and to reflect Your mercy in all we do. Empower our church to be known by the love we give, not just the sermons we preach or studies we go through. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Bible Study # 2 : "The Father's Heart"

– Living the Grace of the Prodigal Son

Main Passage:

Luke 15:11–32 (The Parable of the Prodigal Son)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage believers to rest in and reflect the grace of God.
 - Strengthen the church by fostering unity and compassion.
 - Challenge each person to examine their heart—whether as the prodigal, the elder brother, or both.
-

Opening Prayer

“Father, open our eyes to see Your heart of grace, our ears to hear Your call to come home, and our hearts to be softened toward one another. Shape our church to be more like You. Amen.”

1. Read the Passage: Luke 15:11–32

Have someone read the passage slowly and reflectively. Then take a moment of silence to let the words settle in.

2. Context and Summary

This parable is the third in a series Jesus tells about *lost things* (the lost sheep, the lost coin, and now, the lost son). It’s more than a story of rebellion—it’s a portrait of the **Father’s love**, and it also highlights two different forms of being lost: wandering far and staying near with a cold heart.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. The Reckless Love of the Father

- The younger son’s request was deeply offensive—essentially wishing his father dead to get his inheritance early.
 - Yet, the father not only gives it but later runs to welcome him back with open arms and celebration.
 - **Reflection Question:** How have you personally experienced the Father’s grace in a way that surprised you?
 - **Quote:** *“Though our feelings come and go, His love for us does not.”* — C.S. Lewis
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Psalms 103:10–12** – “He does not treat us as our sins deserve... as far as the east is from the west...”
 - **Romans 5:8** – “But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
-

B. Coming to Our Senses

- The turning point for the prodigal was when “he came to himself” (v.17).
 - Repentance is not just sorrow—it’s returning to the Father, humbly.
 - **Reflection Question:** In what area of your life may you need to “come to your senses” and return to God?
 - **Quote:** *“God loves each of us as if there were only one of us.”* — Augustine
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Acts 3:19** – “Repent and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out...”
 - **Isaiah 30:18** – “The Lord longs to be gracious to you...”
-

C. The Elder Brother Syndrome

- The elder son kept all the rules, but his heart was far from his father's love and joy.
 - He resented grace given to someone "undeserving"—revealing pride and a lack of compassion. Rather than be grateful for his position, he took it for granted.
 - **Reflection Question:** Do you struggle to celebrate grace given to others? Who do you secretly believe is less worthy of forgiveness? What are you taking for granted in regard to God?
 - **Quote:** *"Grace is not reserved for the deserving; it is the gift of God for the undeserving."* — Philip Yancey
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Matthew 20:15** – "Are you envious because I am generous?"
 - **Jonah 4:2** – Jonah is angry because God is "gracious and compassionate."
-

4. A Word to the Church: Becoming a Place of the Father's Heart

This parable invites the church not just to receive grace, but to reflect it. We are called to be:

- A **home for prodigals**: open-armed, not finger-pointing.
- A **challenge to elder brothers**: don't stand at the edge of the party or grumble about others—come inside and celebrate!
- A **mirror of the Father's joy**: actively seeking and restoring the lost.

Challenge:

- Are we more concerned with performance than people?
- Do our attitudes reflect more of the Father or the elder brother?

Group Discussion:

- How can we cultivate a culture of restoration, not judgment?
 - What practices might help us soften elder-brother hearts in our church?
-

5. A Call to Action: "Come Home and Bring Others With You"

Jesus leaves the story open-ended—the elder brother never answers the father's plea.

Personal Application:

- Which character do you identify with most right now: the prodigal, the elder brother, or the father? Why?
- What specific step do you need to take this week—return, repent, forgive, or rejoice?

Church-Wide Application:

- What is one thing our church can do to better welcome returning prodigals and engage wandering hearts?
 - How might pride or grumbling or resentment be preventing growth?
-

Closing Scripture Meditation

2 Corinthians 5:18–20 –

"God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation... we implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God."

Final Prayer

"Father, we thank You for the grace that meets us in the far country and the grace that challenges us in the field. Help us to be a church marked by welcome, humility, and rejoicing over every life returned to You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Bible Study # 3 : "Soil Check"

– Living the Message of the Sower

Main Passage:

Luke 8:4–15 (The Parable of the Sower)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage believers to cultivate receptive hearts.
 - Strengthen the church by deepening commitment to God's Word.
 - Challenge each person to assess what kind of "soil" they are today.
-

Opening Prayer

"Lord, prepare our hearts like fertile soil. Help us to receive Your Word with faith, to guard it with perseverance, and to bear fruit that glorifies You. Speak to us through this parable and change us through Your Spirit. Amen."

1. Read the Passage: Luke 8:4–15

Invite someone to read the parable aloud. Ask the group to listen carefully to the imagery Jesus uses and reflect on the types of soil described.

Perhaps have some seeds, soil, stones, weeds and flowers ready with you for handling and examining during the reading.

2. Context and Summary

Jesus tells a story about a farmer sowing seed, with different outcomes depending on the soil. Later, He explains that the seed is the Word of God, and the soils represent different heart conditions. This parable is both an encouragement and a spiritual heart-check.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. The Word Is Sown for All

- The sower scatters seed generously—it falls on all types of soil. This shows God's heart: *His Word is for everyone*. He is generous and gracious.
 - The issue is not the seed, but the *receptiveness of the soil*.
 - **Reflection Question:** Are we scattering the seed of God's Word broadly, or only among "safe" or familiar soil? Are we only wanting certain 'types' of people to the exclusion of others? Are we ready for whatever may 'grow' as we sow?
 - **Quote:** "*God's Word is not chained.*" — 2 Timothy 2:9
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Isaiah 55:11** – "My word... will not return to me empty..."
 - **Matthew 28:19** – "Go and make disciples of all nations..."
-

B. The Four Soils – Four Heart Conditions

1. **Path** – Hard, unreceptive; the Word is stolen before it can take root.
 2. **Rocky Ground** – Shallow; receives joyfully but falls away in testing.
 3. **Thorns** – Choked by cares, riches, and pleasures.
 4. **Good Soil** – Receives, retains, perseveres, and produces fruit.
- **Reflection Question:** Which soil best describes your *current* heart toward God's Word? Which soil do you *want* to be?
 - **Quote:** "*We must allow the Word of God to confront us, to disturb our security, to undermine our complacency.*" — John Stott
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Proverbs 4:23** – "Above all else, guard your heart..."
 - **Hebrews 4:12** – "The word of God is living and active..."
-

C. Fruitfulness Requires Perseverance

- Good soil is marked not just by initial growth but by long-term *fruitfulness*—a harvest that lasts.
- This fruit often grows slowly, quietly, and through trials.
- **Reflection Question:** What kind of fruit is growing in your life and in our church? How can we cultivate lasting fruit?
- **Quote:** *“The Word of God hidden in the heart is a stubborn voice to suppress.”* — Billy Graham
- **Related Scripture:**
 - **John 15:5** – “If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit...”
 - **James 1:22** – “Do not merely listen to the word... do what it says.”

4. A Word to the Church: Becoming a Cultivated Field

Jesus is calling His listeners—and the church—not just to hear, but to **prepare the soil** of their hearts and lives. As a church, we must:

- **Cultivate good soil** through prayer, discipleship, and spiritual disciplines.
- **Protect the seed** from being snatched, scorched, or choked.
- **Persevere** in teaching and applying God’s Word, even when growth seems slow.

Challenge:

- Are we content just to sow, or are we also cultivating?
- What is our strategy to help new believers grow roots and bear fruit?

Group Discussion:

- What weeds (worries, wealth, or distractions) might be choking fruitfulness in our church community?
 - What spiritual practices help deepen our soil and strengthen our roots?
-

5. A Call to Action: “He Who Has Ears to Hear...”

Jesus ends this parable with a challenge: *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”* This is not about casual listening but **active obedience**.

Personal Application:

- Identify one area where God’s Word is being choked or ignored in your life.
- What step will you take this week to deepen or enhance your soil—through repentance, spiritual disciplines, or removing distractions?

Church-Wide Application:

- How can we better disciple and nourish those who are “new growth” in the faith?
 - How are we each play our part towards Christian discipleship, growing into maturity and increasing numerical growth?
 - Consider creating space for reflection, prayer, and deeper Bible engagement in the church’s weekly rhythm.
-

Closing Scripture Meditation

Colossians 2:6–7 –

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in the faith...”

Final Prayer

“Lord, help us to be a people who not only hear Your Word, but welcome it, guard it, and live it out. Till the soil of our hearts, remove the stones and weeds, and cause us to grow into a fruitful people who glorify You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Bible Study # 4 : "Living Among the Weeds"

– Trusting God's Timing and Justice

Main Passage:

Matthew 13:24–30 (The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage believers to remain faithful in a mixed and messy world.
 - Strengthen the church's confidence in God's justice and final harvest.
 - Challenge each person to examine the fruit of their lives and resist judgmentalism.
-

Opening Prayer

"Lord, give us patience and perspective in a world where good and evil grow side by side. Help us to trust Your timing, walk in holiness, and shine as Your wheat in a field full of weeds. Teach us from Your Word today. Amen."

1. Read the Passage: Matthew 13:24–30

Invite someone to read the passage aloud. Then let the group sit quietly and reflect on the imagery of the wheat, the weeds, and the sower's response.

2. Context and Summary

Jesus tells this parable right after the parable of the sower. This time, the focus is not on different soils, but on the **coexistence of good and evil** in the same field. While people sleep, an enemy sows weeds among the wheat. When the plants grow, the servants want to remove the weeds, but the master says to wait until the harvest. Jesus later explains (in verses 36–43) that the field is the world, the good seed are children of the kingdom, and the weeds are children of the evil one. The harvest is the end of the age.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. The Field Is Mixed – But God Is Not Absent

- We often ask: *"Why does God allow evil to grow alongside good?"* This parable reminds us that **God sees it all** and will deal with it at the right time.
 - **Reflection Question:** How do you respond when it seems like evil is thriving? What helps you stay hopeful?
 - **Quote:** *"God's delays are not His denials. His timing is perfect, even when ours isn't."* — Corrie ten Boom
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Habakkuk 1:13** – "Why do You tolerate wrongdoing?"
 - **2 Peter 3:9** – "The Lord is not slow... but is patient... not wanting anyone to perish..."
-

B. Wheat and Weeds Look Similar – But Bear Different Fruit

- The weeds (likely *darnel*) resembled wheat until maturity—outwardly hard to distinguish.
 - Jesus warns that judgment belongs to God, not us. We are not the harvesters.
 - **Reflection Question:** Are there times when we try to pull weeds instead of trusting the Lord to sort it out?
 - **Quote:** *"When we begin to judge others, we stop loving them."* — Mother Teresa
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **1 Samuel 16:7** – "Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."
 - **James 4:12** – "There is only one Lawgiver and Judge..."
-

C. The Harvest Will Come – God Will Make All Things Right

- The parable assures us: **evil will not win**. God will separate the wheat from the weeds at the right time.
 - For now, the call is to **remain faithful, fruitful, and focused**.
 - **Reflection Question:** What does it look like for you to be “wheat” in a field full of weeds?
 - **Quote:** “Faithfulness in the field now will be honoured in the harvest then.” — Anonymous
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Revelation 14:15** – “The harvest of the earth is ripe.”
 - **Galatians 6:9** – “Let us not grow weary in doing good... for at the proper time we will reap a harvest...”
-

4. A Word to the Church: Faithful and Patient in a Broken World

This parable is a call for the church to be:

- **Humble** – resisting the urge to judge or uproot others prematurely.
- **Holy** – living distinctly and fruitfully as wheat among weeds.
- **Hopeful** – trusting in God’s ultimate justice and timing.

Challenge:

- Are we as a church more focused on pulling weeds or growing wheat?
- Do we reflect God’s patience, or do we panic when the field looks messy?

Group Discussion:

- What temptations do churches face when living among weeds?
 - How can we be known more for our fruitfulness than for our judgments?
 - How do we lovingly disagree?
 - How do we lovingly live differently?
-

5. A Call to Action: “Let Both Grow Together Until the Harvest”

Jesus is calling us to **persevere**, not to purify the field ourselves.

Personal Application:

- Where in your life do you need to stop trying to “fix the field” and start faithfully growing?
- Are there people you’ve been tempted to judge or dismiss as “weeds”?

Church-Wide Application:

- How can our church create space for spiritual growth—even among uncertainty or struggle?
 - Consider ways to cultivate **grace and discernment** in leadership, discipleship, and outreach.
-

Closing Scripture Meditation

Romans 12:21 –

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Final Prayer

“God, help us to trust You in the tension—to grow in faith even when the field around us is confusing. Keep us from judgment, and instead fill us with Your Spirit to bear lasting fruit. We wait for Your harvest, and until then, we will be faithful. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

Bible Study # 5 : "Stewarding What God Entrusts"

– Living the Message of the Talents

Main Passage:

Matthew 25:14–29 (The Parable of the Talents)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage believers to live faithfully with what God has entrusted to them.
- Strengthen the church by activating every member's gifts and resources for the Kingdom.
- Challenge each person to overcome fear and passivity in order to serve Jesus boldly and joyfully.

Opening Prayer

"Father, open our eyes to see what You've entrusted to us. Stir our hearts with courage to invest all we have for Your glory. Teach us today what it means to live as faithful servants of Your Kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen."

1. Read the Passage: Matthew 25:14–29

Have someone read the passage aloud slowly and clearly. Ask the group to listen for how each servant responds and what the master's reaction reveals about God's heart.

2. Context and Summary

This parable is part of Jesus' teaching about the end times and His return. The "man going on a journey" represents Christ, and the "servants" are His people. The talents (a large sum of money) represent the resources, gifts, and responsibilities God gives us. The story focuses not on *how much* each servant was given, but on *what they did with it*.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. Everything We Have Is Entrusted by God

- The master "entrusted his property" to each servant—God is the true owner; we are stewards.
- We don't choose what we receive, but we *do choose how we use it*.
- **Reflection Question:** What has God entrusted to you—spiritually, relationally, materially?
- **Quote:** "*Everything we have is a loan from God to be used for His glory.*" — A.W. Tozer
- **Related Scripture:**
 - **1 Corinthians 4:2** – "It is required of stewards that they be found faithful."
 - **James 1:17** – "Every good and perfect gift is from above..."

B. Faithfulness Means Risk and Action

- The first two servants acted immediately and doubled what was given to them.
 - The third servant buried his gift—he let fear paralyze him.
 - **Reflection Question:** What are you doing with what God has placed in your hands? What are not doing that you should be doing?
 - **Quote:** "*Faith is not believing in spite of evidence; it is obeying in spite of consequence.*" — Oswald Chambers
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **2 Timothy 1:6–7** – "Fan into flame the gift of God... for God gave us a spirit not of fear..."
 - **Hebrews 11:6** – "Without faith it is impossible to please God..."
-

C. One Day the Master Will Return

- Each servant gives an account to the master. The faithful are rewarded with more responsibility and joy.
- The unfaithful servant is not condemned for losing money—but for doing *nothing*.
- **Reflection Question:** What will it mean for you to be ready for Jesus' return—not just watching, but working?
- **Quote:** *"God is more interested in your availability than your ability."* — Rick Warren
- **Related Scripture:**
 - **Romans 14:12** – "Each of us will give an account of ourselves to God."
 - **John 15:8** – "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit..."

4. A Word to the Church: Mobilizing What God Has Given

This parable is a call to a **Kingdom mind-set**:

- **Faithfulness** is not measured by how much we've been given but how we use it.
- **Fear** is a barrier to fruitfulness. Faith means acting, trusting, and investing—even when the outcome is unknown.
- The church must **encourage every member** to use their gifts and time for the growth of God's Kingdom.

Challenge:

- Are we burying our gifts in fear, comparison, or complacency?
- What culture are we creating: one that encourages bold stewardship or one that makes people play it safe or live in fear of making mistakes or being criticised?

Group Discussion:

- What's one area where our church can better identify and empower people to use their gifts?
- How can we help one another move from fear into faithful action?
- How can we be less criticising and more encouraging?

5. A Call to Action: "Well Done, Good and Faithful Servant"

This parable is about **action, risk, and reward**. Jesus wants His church to be fruitful, bold, and faithful—not idle or afraid.

Personal Application:

- Identify a talent (gift, resource, opportunity, or responsibility) you have been given.
- What practical step can you take this week to invest it in God's Kingdom?

Church-Wide Application:

- Consider ways to create **pathways for service, training, and multiplication**.
- Pray about starting a ministry, project, or discipleship group to better steward the gifts within the church.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Ephesians 2:10 –

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

Final Prayer

"Lord, we want to hear You say, 'Well done.' Teach us to be faithful with what we've received. Remove fear, stir up courage, and help us live as Your servants with open hands and active hearts. May we not bury, but boldly build for Your Kingdom. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Bible Study # 6 : "The Rejected Invitation"

– Responding to the Owner of the Vineyard

Main Passage:

Mark 12:1–11 (The Parable of the Tenants)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage believers to honour and receive God's Word and messengers.
 - Strengthen the church's understanding of God's patience and justice.
 - Challenge the church to examine its response to God's authority and His Son.
-

Opening Prayer

"Lord, help us to hear this parable not as a story about others, but as a call to examine our hearts. Give us the grace to honour You with our lives, to welcome Your Word, and to build our lives upon the rejected Cornerstone—Jesus Christ. Amen."

1. Read the Passage: Mark 12:1–11

Have someone read the passage aloud. Encourage the group to listen for who each character represents and the overall tone of the parable.

2. Context and Summary

Jesus tells this parable during His final week in Jerusalem. It's a direct challenge to the religious leaders, spoken in the Temple. A man plants a vineyard (symbolising Israel), leases it to tenants (Israel's leaders), and sends servants (the prophets) to collect fruit. The tenants beat, abuse, and kill them—and finally kill the beloved son (Jesus). The owner will return and bring justice.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. God Is the Patient and Righteous Owner

- God is pictured as a generous and patient landowner. He gave Israel every opportunity to bear fruit and listen to His voice.
 - His repeated sending of servants shows **His grace**—but also **His right to expect fruit**.
 - **Reflection Question:** How does our church respond to God's Word and His rightful authority?
 - **Quote:** *"God's patience is not His permission."* — Unknown
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Isaiah 5:1–7** – The vineyard of the Lord described and judged.
 - **Romans 2:4** – "Do you show contempt for the riches of His kindness... not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?"
-

B. The Rejection of the Son

- Jesus is predicting His own death—and naming Himself as the beloved Son sent by the Father.
 - The builders (religious leaders) rejected the stone, but God made it the cornerstone.
 - **Reflection Question:** In what ways do we still reject Jesus as Lord—by ignoring His Word, marginalizing His commands, or resisting His Spirit?
 - **Quote:** *"He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him."* — John 1:11
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Psalms 118:22–23** – "The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone..."
 - **Acts 4:11–12** – "Salvation is found in no one else..."
-

C. Fruitfulness and Accountability

- God is looking for a **fruitful people**, not just religious activity.
 - The consequence of rejecting the Son is the removal of the vineyard from unfaithful hands.
 - **Reflection Question:** Are we living as stewards of God's vineyard—or owners?
 - **Quote:** *"Jesus will either be the foundation of your life, or the rock you stumble over."* — Tim Keller
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Matthew 21:43** – "The kingdom will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit."
 - **John 15:8** – "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit..."
-

4. A Word to the Church: Will We Receive the Son?

The parable isn't just historical—it's personal and communal. Jesus is asking:

- Will we receive the Son?
- Will we honour the Owner with the vineyard of our lives?
- Will we produce fruit, or resist His claim?

Challenge:

- Are we building our lives and ministries on Christ the Cornerstone—or something else?
- How do we respond when God confronts us through His Word or messengers?

Group Discussion:

- What does faithfulness in the vineyard look like today?
 - How can our church live more fully as tenants who joyfully serve the Lord of the harvest?
-

5. A Call to Action: "This Was the Lord's Doing..."

This parable ends with both warning and wonder. Though rejected, Jesus is exalted. His resurrection proves God's final word.

Personal Application:

- Where do you need to surrender ownership to God again?
- How can you respond more fully to His Word this week?

Church-Wide Application:

- As a church, how can we more faithfully steward the Gospel, welcome the Son, and bear Kingdom fruit?
-

Closing Scripture Meditation

1 Peter 2:6–7 –

"See, I lay a stone in Zion... the one who trusts in Him will never be put to shame."

Final Prayer

"Jesus, we receive You as our Lord and Cornerstone. Forgive us for the times we have rejected Your voice. Help us to live as fruitful servants, rooted in Your grace and grounded in Your truth. In Your name we pray, Amen."

Bible Study # 7 : "The Great Reversal"

– Living in Light of Eternity

Main Passage:

Luke 16:19–31 (The Rich Man and Lazarus)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage believers to live generously and with compassion.
 - Strengthen our awareness of eternity and the urgency of the Gospel.
 - Challenge the church to examine attitudes toward wealth, comfort, and the poor.
-

Opening Prayer

“Lord, awaken our hearts to what truly matters. Teach us to see beyond this life, to live for eternity, and to respond with compassion to those in need. Let Your truth shape our values and our choices. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

1. Read the Passage: Luke 16:19–31

Ask someone to read the passage aloud. Invite the group to imagine the contrast between the two men in life—and in the afterlife.

2. Context and Summary

This parable is unique—Jesus names one of the characters (Lazarus), and it vividly describes both earthly life and the afterlife. An un-named rich man lives in luxury and ignores Lazarus, a poor man who lies at his gate. After death, their roles are reversed: Lazarus is comforted, while the rich man suffers. The rich man begs for help and for someone to warn his brothers—but Abraham says, “They have Moses and the Prophets.”

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. Earthly Status Is Not Eternal Security

- The rich man’s wealth blinded him to the suffering around him. His comfort kept him from compassion.
 - Lazarus’ name means “*God is my help*.” Though overlooked on earth, he is honoured in heaven.
 - **Reflection Question:** Are we more concerned with success and comfort and material wealth or possessions than with eternal things?
 - **Quote:** “*He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.*” — Jim Elliot
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Matthew 6:19–21** – “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...”
 - **James 5:1–5** – A warning to the rich who live in luxury and ignore the cries of the poor.
-

B. Indifference Has Eternal Consequences

- The rich man wasn’t judged for what he did, but for **what he failed to do**—show compassion and care.
 - His blindness to Lazarus led to his eternal separation from God.
 - **Reflection Question:** Who are the “Lazaruses” around us today—those we’re tempted to overlook?
 - **Quote:** “*The opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference.*” — Elie Wiesel
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **1 John 3:17** – “If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother in need...”
 - **Proverbs 14:31** – “Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker...”
-

C. God's Word Is Enough—But Must Be Heeded

- The rich man wants a miraculous sign to convince his brothers. But Abraham says: *"They have Moses and the Prophets."*
- Jesus hints that even His resurrection won't convince those who harden their hearts.
- **Reflection Question:** Are we waiting for signs—or responding to the Word we already have?
- **Quote:** *"Revelation is wasted where there is no response."* — Leonard Ravenhill
- **Related Scripture:**
 - **Hebrews 4:7** – "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."
 - **Luke 24:27** – Jesus explains all things concerning Himself through Moses and the Prophets.

4. A Word to the Church: Eternity Shapes Everything

This parable is a sobering reminder:

- Comfort can numb us to compassion.
- Indifference is dangerous – to ourselves and to others.
- God has spoken—through His Word, and ultimately through His Son.

Challenge:

- Are we using what we've been given to serve God and others—or simply living for ourselves?
- Is our church known more for hospitality and mercy—or for status and appearance?

Group Discussion:

- How can we cultivate awareness of the needs around us, both spiritually and physically?
- In what ways can our church be more active in responding to poverty, loneliness, or injustice?

5. A Call to Action: "They Have Moses and the Prophets..."

We have God's Word, His Spirit, and His Church. The question is not whether we've heard—it's whether we will respond.

Personal Application:

- Identify someone in your life or community you may have overlooked.
- What step can you take this week to show compassion and honour their dignity?

Church-Wide Application:

- What ministry or outreach can your church pursue that reflects the heart of this parable?
- How can your leadership culture resist comfort and embrace sacrificial love?

Closing Scripture Meditation

1 Timothy 6:18–19 –

"Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous... so they may take hold of the life that is truly life."

Final Prayer

"Father, help us to see with eternal eyes. Break our hearts for what breaks Yours. Keep us from living for comfort and move us to act with love. We want to respond to Your Word with obedience and compassion. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Bible Study # 8 : "God Opposes the Proud"

– The Heart That God Honours

Main Passage:

Luke 18:9–14 (The Pharisee and the Tax Collector)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage honest self-examination before God.
 - Strengthen the church's understanding of humility, grace, and justification.
 - Challenge religious pride and call believers to sincere repentance and mercy.
-

Opening Prayer

"Lord, strip away our pride and pretences. Teach us to come to You with humble, repentant hearts. Help us to trust not in our righteousness, but in Your mercy. In Jesus' name, Amen."

1. Read the Passage: Luke 18:9–14

Ask someone to read the passage slowly and clearly. Invite everyone to pay attention to posture, words, and tone of both men.

2. Context and Summary

Jesus told this parable to "those who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else." The Pharisee represents religious pride—he stands and boasts of his virtues. The tax collector stands at a distance, won't even look up, and pleads for mercy. Jesus flips expectations: the sinner, not the religious leader, goes home justified.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. The Danger of Religious Pride

- The Pharisee's prayer is all about himself: *"I... I... I..."*
 - He compares himself to others instead of to God's holiness.
 - Pride turns religion into self-exaltation instead of worship.
 - **Reflection Question:** Are there ways we've trusted in our own goodness instead of God's mercy?
 - **Quote:** *"Pride is the only disease that makes everyone sick except the one who has it."* — Unknown
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Isaiah 64:6** – "All our righteous acts are like filthy rags..."
 - **Proverbs 16:18** – "Pride goes before destruction..."
-

B. The Power of Humble Repentance

- The tax collector doesn't justify himself—he simply cries, *"God, have mercy on me, a sinner."*
 - His humility and honesty are what God honours.
 - This is the posture that leads to justification—being made right with God.
 - **Reflection Question:** What does genuine repentance look like in our daily lives?
 - **Quote:** *"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."* — James 4:6
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Psalms 51:17** – "A broken and contrite heart You will not despise."
 - **Micah 6:8** – "To act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly..."
-

C. God Looks at the Heart

- The religious world would have expected the Pharisee to be righteous (right with God). Jesus reveals the opposite.
- God's judgment is based on the heart, not external performance or appearances.
- **Reflection Question:** What would our prayer life sound like if it truly reflected our heart? How might we pray more honestly and humbly?
- **Quote:** *"Better to limp in humility than to strut in hypocrisy."* — Anonymous
- **Related Scripture:**
 - **1 Samuel 16:7** – "People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."
 - **Romans 3:23–24** – "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God..."

4. A Word to the Church: The Posture that Pleases God

This parable is a **mirror** for every believer and every church:

- Do we use our "spiritual success" to look down on others?
- Are we more concerned with appearing holy than being honest with God?
- Are we creating a culture where brokenness is welcomed—or hidden?

Challenge:

- Pride isolates. Humility invites healing.
- Our church should be a place where sinners can pray, *"God, have mercy,"* and find grace.

Group Discussion:

- How can we become a community where people feel safe to be honest about their struggles?
- What spiritual habits help us cultivate humility and resist pride?
- How are we getting in the way of people finding or experiencing God?

5. A Call to Action: "He Went Home Justified..."

God isn't impressed by our religious achievements—but He is moved by our sincere, humble hearts.

Personal Application:

- Take time this week for honest confession before God.
- Pray the tax collector's prayer: "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." Mean it deeply.

Church-Wide Application:

- Consider having times of confession in worship, or creating spaces for people to share honestly and receive prayer.

Closing Scripture Meditation

James 4:10 –

"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up."

Final Prayer

"God, we confess our pride and our tendency to perform instead of repent. Thank You for Your mercy that meets us when we come humbly. May we never forget our need for You, and may we welcome others with the same grace You have shown us. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Bible Study # 9 : "Persistent Prayer and a Just God"

– Never Give Up

Main Passage:

Luke 18:1–8 (The Parable of the Unjust Judge)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage the church to remain faithful in prayer.
 - Strengthen believers' confidence in God's justice and timing.
 - Challenge our patience and perseverance in a culture of instant answers.
-

Opening Prayer

"Lord, teach us to pray with faith, boldness, and perseverance. Stir in us a holy determination to seek Your justice, trust Your heart, and never give up. Strengthen us as we wait on You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

1. Read the Passage: Luke 18:1–8

Have someone read the passage aloud. Ask the group to reflect on the widow's persistence and the judge's indifference.

2. Context and Summary

Jesus tells this parable to **encourage His disciples to always pray and not give up**. A widow seeks justice from an unjust judge who doesn't fear God or care about people. But her persistence wears him down, and he gives her what she wants. Jesus contrasts this with God's character—He is not unjust, and He delights in answering His people's cries. The real question is: *"When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?"*

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. The Power of Persistent Prayer

- The widow is vulnerable, poor, and powerless—but she refuses to be silent or side-lined.
 - Persistence in prayer is not nagging—it's a sign of faith.
 - **Reflection Question:** What does your prayer life say about your belief in God's justice and goodness?
 - **Quote:** *"Pray hardest when it's hardest to pray."* — Unknown
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **1 Thessalonians 5:17** – "Pray without ceasing."
 - **Colossians 4:2** – "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful."
-

B. God Is Not Like the Unjust Judge

- Jesus uses a contrast: if even a corrupt judge gives justice, how much more will a righteous God do for His people?
 - God is not reluctant—He is willing, loving, and attentive.
 - **Reflection Question:** What lies or doubts about God's character might be holding you back from praying boldly?
 - **Quote:** *"God is never late, but He is rarely early."* — Corrie ten Boom
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Psalms 145:18–19** – "The Lord is near to all who call on Him... He hears their cry and saves them."
 - **Isaiah 30:18** – "The Lord longs to be gracious to you..."
-

C. Faith That Endures

- Jesus connects prayer with **faith**—those who trust God keep praying, even when answers delay.
 - The parable ends with a searching question: “*Will He find faith?*” This implies that persistent prayer is a mark of living faith.
 - **Reflection Question:** Are we more interested in instant results or in long-term faithfulness? Do we keep our faith hidden?
 - **Quote:** “*The greatest tragedy of life is not unanswered prayer, but unoffered prayer.*” — F.B. Meyer
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Hebrews 11:6** – “Without faith it is impossible to please God...”
 - **Luke 11:9–10** – “Ask... seek... knock...”
-

4. A Word to the Church: Keep Knocking

This parable reminds the church to never give up:

- Prayer is a declaration of dependence on God.
- Justice may be delayed, but it is not denied.
- The Church must be a **community of intercession**, not just activity.

Challenge:

- Are we a church that prays first—or as a last resort?
- Do we persevere in prayer for justice, revival, healing, deliverance and the lost?

Group Discussion:

- What are some areas where we’ve grown weary in prayer?
 - How can we support one another in persistent, believing prayer?
 - Where might God find ‘faith’ in our fellowship?
-

5. A Call to Action: “He Will See That They Get Justice”

Jesus promises that God will act—not always in our time, but always in His perfect way.

Personal Application:

- Write down one area where you’ve been tempted to stop praying.
- Commit this week to bring it before God daily, with renewed faith.
- What size would you measure your faith? Why? How might it grow greater from there?

Church-Wide Application:

- Consider setting aside a time weekly for corporate prayer focused on justice, salvation, and breakthrough.
-

Closing Scripture Meditation

Romans 12:12 –

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”

Final Prayer

“Father, thank You that You hear every cry and honour every prayer. Forgive us when we grow weary or doubtful. Renew our faith to believe You for great things. Teach us to persevere like the widow, and to trust like children in the care of a loving Father. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

To reflect on ...

In Matthew 17:20 and Luke 17:6 the Greek phrases it “faith *as* a mustard seed” not “faith *as small* as a mustard seed” – there is no Greek word for ‘small’ there.

In other words, our faith is to be just like a mustard seed which though it may start off small, it grows and grows to ‘achieve’ bigger and bigger ‘results’ (ie. mountains and mulberries uprooted).

Faith is meant to grow.

Bible Study # 10 : "The Invitation of Grace"

– Don't Miss the Feast

Main Passage:

Luke 14:15–24 (The Parable of the Wedding Feast)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage us to treasure and respond to God's invitation to His kingdom.
 - Strengthen our understanding of grace over merit.
 - Challenge the church to reach the overlooked, the outcast, and the spiritually hungry.
-

Opening Prayer

"Lord, thank You for inviting us to Your kingdom feast. Help us not to take Your grace lightly, and awaken our hearts to the joy of Your call. Give us urgency to share Your invitation with those who feel forgotten. In Jesus' name, Amen."

1. Read the Passage: Luke 14:15–24

Invite someone to read it aloud. Encourage the group to notice who is invited, who makes excuses, and who ends up enjoying the banquet.

2. Context and Summary

Jesus shares this parable at a meal with Pharisees after one of them remarks, *"Blessed is the one who will eat at the feast in the kingdom of God."* In response, Jesus tells the story of a man who prepares a great banquet. But when the time comes, those initially invited make excuses. The host, angered, opens the invitation to the poor, crippled, blind, and lame—anyone willing to come.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. God's Kingdom Is a Feast

- God compares His kingdom not to a courtroom or classroom—but a banquet! It's rich, joyful, and full of relationship.
 - The feast is prepared—it's not earned, only received.
 - **Reflection Question:** How do you view life with God—more like a burden or a banquet?
 - **Quote:** *"Christianity is one beggar telling another beggar where he found bread."* — D.T. Niles
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Isaiah 25:6** – "On this mountain the Lord will prepare a feast..."
 - **Revelation 19:9** – "Blessed are those invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!"
-

B. Excuses Are the Enemy of the Kingdom

- The invited guests give seemingly reasonable excuses—property, work, relationships. But all reflect misplaced priorities.
 - Excuses reveal what we value most. They also reveal hearts that are not hungry for God.
 - **Reflection Question:** What things in life might be distracting or delaying your full response to God's invitation? Are you not hungry for the good things of God because you are 'filling up' on other menus offered?
 - **Quote:** *"There is always enough time to do God's will."* — Elisabeth Elliot
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **Matthew 6:33** – "Seek first the kingdom of God..."
 - **Luke 9:62** – "No one who puts a hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom..."
-

C. Grace Extends to the Margins

- The host sends his servant to invite *“the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame”*—those most excluded from society.
- God’s grace is radically inclusive. No one is too broken to be welcomed.
- **Reflection Question:** Are we more comfortable inviting people like us—or are we embracing the outsider, the forgotten, the rejected?
- **Quote:** *“God loves the lost too much to leave them uninvited.”* — Anonymous
- **Related Scripture:**
 - **James 2:1–5** – A warning against favoritism in the church.
 - **1 Corinthians 1:26–29** – “Not many were wise or influential... God chose the weak things...”

4. A Word to the Church: Extend the Invitation

This parable challenges the church to:

- Reject apathy and spiritual entitlement.
- Embrace God’s heart for the poor, overlooked, and spiritually hungry.
- Go **out to the highways and hedges**—beyond our walls and comfort zones.

Challenge:

- Are we content just being invited—or are we bringing others in?
- Are we making room for the people Jesus came to reach?
- Are we restrictive in our welcome? Why?

Group Discussion:

- What are some modern-day “excuses” that keep people from responding to the Gospel?
- How can we make our church more welcoming to people on the fringes?
- Why might people not want to be associated with ‘church’ or BRBC in particular? How might we play our part in changing this?

5. A Call to Action: “Compel Them to Come In”

Jesus uses strong language—*“compel them.”* That speaks to urgency, love, and intentional pursuit.

Personal Application:

- Think of one person in your life who might feel unworthy or uninterested in God’s invitation.
- Pray and ask God for an opportunity this week to share the invitation of grace with them.

Church-Wide Application:

- Identify a ministry or outreach that can go to the “highways and hedges” in your community.
- Consider hosting a community meal or event that reflects the welcome of this parable.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Revelation 22:17 –

“The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let the one who hears say, ‘Come!’”

Final Prayer

“Jesus, thank You for Your invitation to the feast. Help us never take it for granted. Make us bold and loving in calling others in. May our lives reflect the joy, urgency, and grace of the kingdom of God. In Your name, Amen.”

Bible Study # 11 : "The Final Separation"

– Living for Eternity Today

Main Passage:

Matthew 25:31–46 (The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats / The Last Judgment)

Purpose of the Study

This Bible study is designed to:

- Encourage the church to live with eternal perspective and readiness.
 - Strengthen the link between genuine faith and compassionate action.
 - Challenge believers to examine how they treat “the least of these.”
-

Opening Prayer

“Lord Jesus, help us to live in light of Your return. Give us eyes to see You in the hurting and needy. Awaken our hearts to love as You have loved us—with sacrifice, compassion, and truth. Prepare us to stand before You with joy. In Your holy name, Amen.”

1. Read the Passage: Matthew 25:31–46

Have someone read the passage slowly and clearly. Encourage the group to picture the scene—Christ on the throne, the nations gathered, the separation taking place. What feelings or realisations might be experienced?

2. Context and Summary

This parable is part of Jesus’ teaching about the end of the age. Here, He describes a future judgment where people are separated like sheep and goats based on how they treated others—specifically “*the least of these*.” The sheep are welcomed into eternal life, having served Christ through acts of compassion. The goats are turned away, having failed to recognize and respond to the needs of Christ’s brothers and sisters.

3. Key Themes and Reflections

A. Jesus Will Return as King and Judge

- This is not a metaphor—Jesus speaks of a real, coming day of judgment.
 - He will return in glory and sit on His throne; everyone will give account.
 - **Reflection Question:** How often do you think about Jesus' return? How does it affect how you live today? Why?
 - **Quote:** “*Only one life, ’twill soon be past. Only what’s done for Christ will last.*” — C.T. Studd
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **2 Corinthians 5:10** – “We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...”
 - **Hebrews 9:27** – “Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment...”
-

B. Loving Jesus Means Loving the Least

- Jesus identifies Himself with the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and imprisoned.
 - The difference between the sheep and the goats wasn’t belief—it was **how their faith expressed itself in love.**
 - **Reflection Question:** Who in your life might Jesus call “the least of these” today? Are you or have you ever regarded yourself as “the least”? Why?
 - **Quote:** “*You have never looked into the eyes of someone who does not matter to God.*” — Anonymous
 - **Related Scripture:**
 - **James 2:14–17** – “Faith without works is dead...”
 - **1 John 3:17–18** – “Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.”
-

C. Eternity Is Shaped by Our Response

- This is one of Jesus' clearest teachings on eternal separation—He speaks of **eternal life** and **eternal punishment**.
- Our eternal destiny is tied not to mere profession, but to the transformation of our lives through Christ.
- **Reflection Question:** Is there anything in your life today you would change if you knew Jesus was returning tomorrow? What is preventing the change you would like to see?
- **Quote:** *"The best way to prepare for the return of Christ is to live like He's already here."* — Leonard Ravenhill
- **Related Scripture:**
 - **Romans 2:6–7** – "God will repay each person according to what they have done."
 - **Galatians 6:9–10** – "Let us not grow weary in doing good..."

4. A Word to the Church: Live Ready, Love Deeply

This passage calls the church to **eternal awareness** and **earthly compassion**:

- We are not saved by works—but we are saved **for** good works (Ephesians 2:10).
- Jesus is deeply concerned with how we treat the poor, the broken, and the marginalized.

Challenge:

- Is our church a place where Jesus would say, *"You clothed Me, welcomed Me, visited Me..."*? Why or Why not?
- How might theological 'accuracy' and Christ-like action work hand-in-hand?

Group Discussion:

- How can we cultivate a lifestyle of practical compassion as a church?
- In what ways can we become more aware of Jesus in the faces of "the least of these"?

5. A Call to Action: "Whatever You Did for One of the Least..."

We don't know the day of Christ's return—but we can choose today to live in such a way that we're ready.

Personal Application:

- Choose one act of mercy to carry out this week—something simple, specific, and sacrificial.
- Begin each day asking, "Lord, show me where You are in the people around me today."

Church-Wide Application:

- Identify one group in your community that represents "the least of these" and commit to serving them regularly as a church.
- Let your outreach ministries reflect Jesus' heart for justice, mercy, and love.

Closing Scripture Meditation

Micah 6:8 –

"He has shown you... what is good: to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God."

Final Prayer

"Jesus, we want to be found among Your sheep—not for our glory, but for Yours. Forgive us for where we've ignored the hurting and overlooked the broken. Teach us to love as You love. May our faith be active, our hearts be tender, and our lives be ready for the day You return. In Your name, Amen."