

A large, stylized letter 'C' composed of two concentric dark blue arcs. The word 'COVENANT' is written in dark blue, uppercase, sans-serif font along the top curve of the 'C'. The word 'SERIES' is written in dark blue, uppercase, sans-serif font along the bottom curve of the 'C'.

COVENANT  
SERIES

DEVOTIONS

Riverlife  
BAPTIST CHURCH

# CONTENTS

## WEEK ONE

<b>Day 1</b>	Covenant-Making God	5
<b>Day 2</b>	God's Covenant with Abraham	8
<b>Day 3</b>	God's Covenant with David	11
<b>Day 4</b>	God's Covenant with Us: A Covenant of Grace	14
<b>Day 5</b>	Power of Commitment	17

## WEEK TWO

<b>Day 1</b>	Body Life	21
<b>Day 2</b>	Referred Pain	24
<b>Day 3</b>	Bridal Waltz	27
<b>Day 4</b>	Real Love	30
<b>Day 5</b>	Love Yourself?	33

## WEEK THREE

<b>Day 1</b>	The Work Of Connection	37
<b>Day 2</b>	The Encouragement of Gathering	40
<b>Day 3</b>	Awe and Wonder	43
<b>Day 4</b>	Prepared for Worship	46
<b>Day 5</b>	God with You	49

## WEEK FOUR

<b>Day 1</b>	Our Selfish Heart	53
<b>Day 2</b>	Heart Exchange	56
<b>Day 3</b>	Friends	59
<b>Day 4</b>	Jonathan: Surrendered Service	62
<b>Day 5</b>	Living out of a Surrendered Heart	65

## WEEK FIVE

<b>Day 1</b>	Our Creator and Provider	69
<b>Day 2</b>	God's Well Never Runs Dry	72
<b>Day 3</b>	Small Things Matter	75
<b>Day 4</b>	Sow Generously	78
<b>Day 5</b>	Extravagant in Generosity	81



**W E E K  
O N E**

DAY 1

# The Covenant-Making God

**“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”**

HEBREWS 8:10 (ESV)

**Read: Hebrews 8:7-13**

As we start this exploration of covenant, both God's covenant with us and our covenant with God and each other, it's essential to begin with what God has already done and promised. From the beginning of the Scriptures, God has been in a covenant relationship with Himself. As we watch the story of God's redemptive plan unfold, we catch these glimpses into the relationship that the Trinity has with themselves. It's committed, focused on serving the other members, and inclusive. What seems most amazing to me is that, amid such an amazing relationship, God decided it was worth creating humanity, and inviting us into this relationship!

Of course, as the events unfold, humanity rejects that place of relationship and covenant commitment. We, as a whole, decided we were better without God, yet in His faithfulness and unfailing love God continually made way for us to be in this sincere and committed relationship with Him. He initiated a covenant with Abraham, with Moses and the nation of Israel, with David and his entire family line, and then finally through Jesus. In Jesus, God is making a covenant with all humanity, inviting to participate all who would listen and respond into this mutually loving and beneficial committed relationship.

What I find most amazing about this is that regardless of our response to Him, be it personal or as His created people, He continually offers us an invitation into this covenant relationship. In the midst of the Old Testament's lowest point, when the Israelites were destroying each other, worshipping false gods and being overtaken by foreign powers, God speaks through Jeremiah the prophet. He speaks of a time that is coming when God will take this covenant He's willingly offered to humanity and write it directly on to our hearts. He's going to take this commitment and not make it about external obedience, but about a new internal reality. The author of Hebrews takes this promise and points us to Jesus and the church as the realisation of this promise. What an amazing God!

## Pray

God, thank You for Your faithfulness, and Your unwavering commitment to me, Your child. When I didn't even deserve it, You decided that I was worth it, and You committed Yourself to me. Thank You.

## Covenant Challenge

- + Take some time today to read and reflect on the passage from Hebrews, and journal down what it means to you to belong to God's people, as His daughter or son.
- + We can sum up the 'law' of God a few ways. One is: "Love the Lord Your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. And, 'love your neighbour as yourself'" (Luke 10:27).
- + Write this out as a declaration today ("I will love the Lord...") and have it on display somewhere as you go about your day, as a reminder of this committed relationship you have with God.

DAY 2

# God's Covenant with Abraham

**“...I will establish my covenant  
between me and you and  
your offspring after you  
throughout their generations  
for an everlasting covenant,  
to be God to you and to your  
offspring after you.”**

GENESIS 17:7 (ESV)

**Read: Genesis 17:1-7**



Have you ever met one of those really encouraging people who seem to be able to look past whatever is going on in your life and speak straight to the things you've hidden in your heart? When those people say these things, it can be a pretty tough thing to hear, often because we can't believe it about ourselves. We have reduced the dreams of our heart to the lived experience of our lives in our current situation. Sometimes, it's just too hard to try to hold on to our hopes and dreams when things aren't going well.

Abraham is a bit like that. God told him in Genesis 12 that he'd be the father of a great nation, in fact, a nation so numerous that his offspring would be like the sand on the seashore. God said this to Abraham when he was seventy-five years old. In Genesis 17, Abraham is ninety-nine years old, and he has only one son by a servant-girl. If anyone had reason to think that God's 'encouraging' words were too hard to think about, let alone get on board with, it was Abraham. Yet when God reminds Abraham of the covenant that He's made in Genesis 17, Abraham is only one year away from the birth of Isaac, his true son and the beginning of the family promise that God had made.

What a reminder for us that when God makes a covenant with us, He is the one who will work it out in the right timing. He knows best when it will bless us, and ultimately work toward His purposes for His kingdom.

What a challenge to remember amid our circumstances! Right now, in your circumstances, can you spend some time remembering the promises God has made to you? Can you step past your situation to hear the covenant-heart of God, that will see His promises come to pass?

## Pray

God, I choose right now to keep my eyes, mind and hope set on You. If You have promised it, You are the one who is working it out in my life. Please keep my heart and hope focussed on You and not my circumstances. Amen.

## Covenant Challenge

- + Write out on a new piece of paper a promise God has given you (maybe from scripture, from a personal journal, or a prophetic word). As you write it, release responsibility for that promise back to God.
- + Ask someone else what promises God has spoken into their lives, and spend a moment praying for them about those promises.

DAY 3

# God's Covenant with David

**“...I will raise up your  
offspring after you, one  
of your own sons, and I  
will establish his kingdom.  
He shall build a house for  
me, and I will establish his  
throne forever.”**

1 CHRONICLES 17:11-12 (ESV)

**Read: 1 Chronicles 17:3-15**

King David was Israel's most famous and successful king because of his deep desire to remain after God's own heart (see 1 Samuel 13:14 and 16:7). In this passage, we read of a covenant that God makes with David which is unconditional. In other words, God promised the establishment of a kingdom for one of David's sons. There is nothing that David could have done to alter this covenant, unlike the covenants God made with Noah, Abraham and Moses. Let's take a closer look at the covenant God made with David.

Firstly, God promises that He will build a house. This house is not merely referring to a home that David would live in with his family. It is referring to a place that the ark of the covenant would remain. Before David, the ark of the covenant (the place that God's presence would dwell, see Exodus 25:22), moved about with the tabernacle. However, here God is saying that He will establish a permanent place to dwell. David's son Solomon would be the one to fulfil this promise, when he built the temple where the presence of God would rest. We now know that this temple was referring to the reality of believers being temples of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 6:19).

However, this is not merely referring to the temple as a house for God. It is also referring to David's family household and lineage, initially in his son Solomon, but ultimately in Jesus Christ who came from the line of David. God knew that even though David was a good king, humanity didn't need a good king but a perfect king; one that would not only rule over the borders of Israel but over both the borders of the human heart and the entire universe.

God promised David that through his offspring the Kingdom of God would be established and that the whole world would be ruled by a king who is called "Faithful and True" (see Revelation 19:11).

There is nothing that we can do to change God's promise to establish his Kingdom here on earth through the reign of Christ. It is an unconditional covenant, and Jesus sits on the throne! We can either work against it, as if we are swimming against a current, or fully embrace it by thanking God for all He has done.

## Pray

Father, thank You for establishing Your throne and Your rule over this world, and for keeping Your promises. You are Faithful, and You are True! Help me today to see Your Kingdom at work and to make my heart a temple for Your presence.

## Covenant Challenge

- + Establish a household covenant with your family or housemates that honours God as the King, and honours each other as part of God's household.
- + Later, in 1 Chronicles 17, David prays and praises the Lord. Write a poem, prayer or song thanking God for all he has done for you.

DAY 4

# God's Covenant with Us: A Covenant of Grace

**"...in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world."**

HEBREWS 1:2 (ESV)

**Read: Hebrews 1:1-3**

Each covenant that God made with the Israelites was not only for their benefit but also for the nations of the world. In fact, each of the covenants were acting as signposts, pointing toward something or someone that was far greater. These old covenants were legitimate and allowed Israel to interact with God faithfully; however, they were not the ultimate covenant.

Under the old covenant, God interacted with humanity through Noah, Abraham, Moses and David, along with all the various prophets and priests. These leaders, though imperfect, faithfully led the community towards God's best, in accordance to the various covenants that God had made with the people. Regardless of their best efforts, none of them could fulfil God's covenant of grace that had been made when humanity fell from their place of authority and rest in the garden.

In the garden, after Adam and Eve ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil and sin entered the world, God made a covenant with them and with the enemy, that from Eve's lineage would come a person who would crush the serpent's head (see Genesis 3:15). This person would need to be powerful enough to defeat satan and the powers of sin and death and restore humanity into right relationship with God once again. This person, of course, is Jesus. As C.S. Lewis said, "On the back of Satan's neck is a nail-scarred footprint."

Jesus is the only one who has the authority to restore humanity to the Father because He has been appointed as the heir of all things. So, while the old covenant momentarily brought humankind to God, the new covenant revealed through the Son is the best (and only) way to the Father. The laws of old that were written on tables of stone have now been written on the hearts of every believer (see Hebrews 8:10), making the old covenant obsolete. In His life, death, burial and resurrection, Jesus has fulfilled the old covenant and allowed us access to the Father.

## Pray

Jesus, I thank You that You gave up Your life, to give me Your abundant life. Help me to follow Your footsteps and Your example as I live under the new covenant.

## Covenant Challenge

- + Take time to memorise the passage above and write down what God is revealing to you as you do that.



DAY 5

# Power of Commitment

**“Commit your way to the Lord;  
trust in him, and he will act.”**

PSALM 37:5 (ESV)

**Read: Psalm 37:3-7**

There's something special about marriage as opposed to a couple just living together. While it may look very similar: shared responsibilities, shared possessions and a shared life; marriage has a formalised vow of commitment.

In the reading for today, David understands that his relationship with God brings him more joy, more delight and more satisfaction than any other relationship. He has found his greatest pleasure in God. David has trusted God and as a result, has found joy in what God enjoys.

Committed relationships are built on mutual trust. This two-way covenantal relationship means that David had not only learned to trust God but had also committed himself to God. The invitation from God is the same for us: to commit ourselves in the relationship. It's as if God Himself has proposed to us. When we accept the invitation, we are committing ourselves to be faithful and trustworthy, and as a result, we will then enjoy the relationship which brings identity, meaning, blessing and joy. These are the very desires of a God-surrendered heart.

This commitment requires that we adjust ourselves to God. As we spend more intimate time in God's presence, we are allowing Him to show us our situation from His perspective. Because we trust in the character of God, we can open ourselves up to the adjustments that are required, and our hearts begin then to desire the same things as God.

Commitment to God is a willingness to give yourself 100%: heart, soul, mind and strength. As you commit yourself to Him, you are seeking His priorities and making them your own. As we make these adjustments, we will find great joy in the Lord, we will see what is truly important, and we will long for these things as the Father does. It is as we trust and commit that He will act on our behalf.

## Pray

Lord God, today I choose to trust in You and commit my ways to You. As I do this Lord, show me things from Your perspective, allow my heart to begin to desire the same things that Your heart desires. I want what matters to You to matter to me. Today I commit to seeking Your priorities in all I do.

## Covenant Challenge

- + Set aside 30 minutes today to come into God's presence with a commitment to seek His priorities and make the necessary adjustments to your life.

**WEEK  
TWO**



DAY 1

# Body Life

**“Even so the body is not made  
up of one part but many.”**

1 CORINTHIANS 12:14 (NIV)

**Read: 1 Corinthians 12:14-20**

The human body is incredibly fascinating and complex. Although every part is different, they need each other to be able to come together as a fully functioning whole. Did you know that you were made to fit into the church so that it would be a fully functioning body?

We are created by God to live in community. This community is intimate, designed to be lived in an interdependent way, just like the human body is made up of interdependent parts. In 1 Corinthians, Paul uses the picture of the body to help us understand the body of Christ. As a part of the body, the Holy Spirit has divinely given different spiritual gifts to each part of the body. Like the body is made up of many parts but considered as one whole being, so too the church, as the body of Christ is one unified whole. The unity we experience as a part of the body comes from the presence of God, Holy Spirit.

As a result of how the Spirit has formed us, we now belong to one another. Like the different parts of the body are intimately connected, so too are we. We are entirely reliant on the rest of the body, and the more diverse the piece we are, the more we need the whole. An eye doesn't need another dozen eyes, but it sure needs a hand. Variety is essential, and that means what you uniquely bring to the body is of value.

The mutual interdependence we are invited into is an integral part of how God designed the body. There's a balance to knowing that what we bring fits and is vital for the functionality of the body and being humble and valuing other contributions. "I also want you to think about how this keeps your significance from getting blown up into self-importance. For no matter how significant you are, it is only because of what you are a part of" (1 Corinthians 12:19–20, MSG).

## Pray

Lord, help me to grow in loving community with my brothers and sisters in Christ. Help me to understand the vital role I play in Your body and to value what others bring to the functionality of the body. May there be a unity that makes You beautiful to the world around me.

## Covenant Challenge

- + Reflect on what part you play in the body of Christ.
- + Send a message to someone else identifying and encouraging the role they play in the body of Christ.

DAY 2

# Referred Pain

**“If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together.”**

1 CORINTHIANS 12:26 (NIV)

**Read: 1 Corinthians 12:21-26**



Suffering is a part of life, I'm sorry to say. In a passage in John 16, Jesus tells us that in this life we will have trouble! Our reading today talks about the flow-on effect of corporate suffering when one of us suffers. While it's true that we won't necessarily feel the same pain as someone who is grieving, or going through marriage difficulty, or having financial problems, as members of one body, we feel the referred pain. We recognise the echo of this pain in our community.

What is our response to suffering when we either face it individually or as part of a community?

The Psalms in the Old Testament have a strong tradition of lament. Before we go any further, it's important to know that this is not a tradition of complaining! At the heart of the lament is a voicing of hurt and anger, which moves to submission to God, and finally a relinquishment of that same hurt, anger and pain. It also seems to start a kind of redistribution of power.

When we engage in lamenting with God, it moves us from a superficial faith (one where we might only see ourselves as docile beings limited to giving praise to a distant God no matter the circumstances), to a faith which stands on the covenant relationship God has made with us. It allows us to invite God to engage with us in our crisis.

God's promise to us is that He hears our cries! When we cry out to Him about injustice or suffering in our lives, we invite Him to move into action.

The theologian Walter Brueggeman writes, "Where the cry is not voiced, heaven is not moved and history is not initiated. And then the end is hopelessness." So, let's cry out to God in the face of suffering and injustice in our own lives. Let's ask heaven to move on our behalf and in the lives of the people in our communities.

## Pray

Lord, I want to bring to You [name here the emotion/feelings about your or a community member's situation]. I am calling upon You as the Author and Perfecter of my faith, the Lover of my soul, the One who saves and redeems, into step into my situation and act! Would You breakthrough in this area? Ultimately, I trust You, and I surrender myself, my hopes, my dreams, my future to You. Holy Spirit, come and fill me with peace.

### Covenant Challenge

- + Is there someone you know who is going through a time of suffering that you can lament alongside?
- + Have you got something in your own life that you have been carrying, but are too afraid to call upon God to act upon it? Why not spend some time inviting the Holy Spirit to show you the truth in this, and to move you to a place of greater faith to call upon God?

DAY 3

# Bridal Waltz

**“Husbands, love your wives, just as  
Christ loved the church and gave  
himself up for her..”**

EPHESIANS 5:25 (NIV)

**Read: Ephesians 5:25-33**

The message of Christ is ultimately centred on Jesus' decision to give Himself up for us. Jesus refers to Himself as the Bridegroom, and within the New Testament, the church is referred to as His Bride. Jesus' goal during His time on earth was always to reconcile us back to Him, the "ministry of reconciliation" as Paul describes it in 2 Corinthians. There is no human relationship that better reflects this "oneness" than marriage.

As part of this ministry of reconciliation, Jesus chose us before we knew Him. We didn't even know it yet, but He decided to lay down His life in place of ours. He doesn't just want obedient slaves or debtors. His desire is for relationship and intimacy. Through a divine act of sacrifice, Jesus unites us, not only with Himself but also with each other. We become one: one body; by one spirit; to one Lord; in one faith. And, there is one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all (see Ephesians 4:4-6). There is a rich level of interconnectedness and interdependence described in this that we have perhaps become unfamiliar with in our more individualistic Western culture. We can tend to fall more easily into patterns of competition rather than interdependence, and usually to our own detriment.

When we allow ourselves to see our everyday activities from the perspective of being part of one body, we see that a part of who we are can only be fully realised in community. For example, an eye only recognises its full potential for vision when it is a part of a body.

By becoming one with Christ, we are cleansed, made whole and blameless and brought into the holy reality of being a new creation. We are commissioned with Jesus' ongoing ministry of reconciliation, a ministry of bringing healing and restoration to those we know and who are in our community who do not yet know a saviour.

## Pray

Jesus, thank You for Your sacrifice for me. Thank You that You gave Yourself up so that I can be reconciled to You and be made whole, blameless and holy. Open my eyes and my heart to see what it is to be a part of one body, and how I can be a part of Your ongoing ministry of reconciliation in this world.

### Covenant Challenge

- + Spend 5 minutes reflecting on what it is to be reconciled to Jesus.
- + Write down three ways in which you are a part of our church community. If you don't have three, consider ways in which you feel God is leading you to be a part of our community.
- + Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal two friends/colleagues/family members that you can begin to intercede for and reach out to as part of Jesus' ongoing ministry of reconciliation.

DAY 4

# Real Love

**“And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.”**

1 JOHN 4:21 (ESV)

**Read: 1 John 4:13–21**

There's this moment that I experience most mornings at my house. My alarm goes off, I get up and wake up the kids for school, and then go about my morning routine. Most mornings, I come back out of my room from getting dressed, and there's one of my kids doing their job: emptying the dishwasher. They do it because they know it's their job, and I don't even need to ask, they just do it! It's amazing! I think it stands out because it's not done out of obligation anymore, nor is it something that I must remind them about; it's the obedience and desire of their heart to be a part of our family.

When it comes to loving each other, it's kind of the same. God has loved each of us first, and He asks us to love each other out of that place: a place of being loved. It's powerful when we choose to love and choose to demonstrate that love. Freewill expressed in obedient loving care for one another is a powerful thing. When it comes to our covenant commitment to each other, I think that this is God's model: not loving each other (everyone) out of obligation, which feels forced and meaningless. We love each other (everyone) out of the love He has for us even when it's not comfortable or convenient.

The test comes when we have to demonstrate it. It would be nice if this passage were a kind encouragement, but John writes in his first letter that this is, in fact, a command: "whoever loves God must love his brother." That is where it gets hard for us because sometimes, we don't like our brothers and sisters in the church or in our other relationships. Yet, covenant looks like choosing to love each other when we're in this covenant community. This is what gives real weight and authenticity to our confession of love for God.

## Pray

God, I want my love for You to be true and authentic, and I want my life to be a demonstration of Your love. Will You help me to love those around me in practical and impacting ways, out of the love You have for me, not from obligation and duty?

### Covenant Challenge

- + Spend 5 minutes praying for people that you struggle to love without conditions. Ask God to show you His heart for those people.
- + Choose one person in your relationship circles that you can practically demonstrate love to today. It might be through a gift, an act of service, spending time with them, whatever would make them know they are loved.
- + Pass on an act of love today: pay for a stranger's coffee, let someone go in front of you at the supermarket, offer to do the lunch run for your office, or help out someone in another practical way.



DAY 5

# Love Yourself?

**‘You shall love your neighbour  
as yourself.’**

MARK 12:31A (ESV)

**Read: Mark 12:28-34**

A clever lawyer (most likely an off-duty priest), tried to trick Jesus by asking a question which demanded a particular answer. Jesus obliges the lawyer and responds with the correct answer – the ‘Shema’, an ancient Israelite prayer from Deuteronomy 6: essentially “Love God with everything you have; heart, soul, mind and strength.” Then Jesus adds, “Love your neighbour as yourself.”

Jesus was emphasising that being in relationship with God has a direct and proportional impact on being in community with others. Our faith is not an individualistic faith. In covenant community, we are linked as the one body. When we love those God has also called into His family, we are truly living out our identity as His body, and we fulfil His call to love ourselves.

Jesus also knew that our identity is to be anchored in our relationship to God the Father as sons and daughters, and this affects how we have the capacity to love others. Rightly loving yourself (seeing yourself how God sees you), becomes paramount to healthy covenant relationships with others in God’s family. You simply can’t love others if you don’t learn to love yourself.

## Pray

Lord, help me to see myself how You see me. Please continue Lord, to bring me into closer intimacy with You and others. Help me to love others just as You have loved me. Thank You that loving You with everything I have, heart, soul, mind and strength, expresses itself in healthy self-love and a love for others.

## Covenant Challenge

- + What area of yourself least resembles what God thinks of you?
- + Think of one thing that, if it were done for you, would make you feel like someone loved you. Now do this for someone else.



**WEEK  
THREE**

DAY 1

# The Work Of Connection

**“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”**

EPHESIANS 4:2-3 (NIV)

**Read: Ephesians 4:1-6**

Let's get it out there early: family can be messy. Church family is no different. I didn't grow up in a big family. So when I flew over to the USA to meet my wife's family for the first time, I didn't quite know what to expect. All I knew is that she had a big family and, if they were anything like her, they would have big, fun-filled personalities as well!

What I saw and experienced in my time with them was a group of people who did exactly what Paul is talking about in our Ephesians passage. I saw humility and gentleness. I experienced patience, love and unity. Sure, they disagreed on things, and heated church-related conversations were never far off. In a room with five Pastors, church conversations proved to be unavoidable! However, what I witnessed and was welcomed into was not just a community, but a family of people who had committed to "bearing with one another in love." They had moved beyond just tolerating differences and sharp edges to embracing each other in all of the mess that can come in life. Real, biblical love was their chief concern. Any family that can welcome in the Australian who had "taken" their beloved daughter/sister/niece/cousin back to the other side of the world is doing something right!

What made the difference for me was that even amid the mess that can come with family and life, everyone in the room was having an experience of connection. Paul's encouragement to "be completely humble and gentle; bearing with one another in love" went beyond just ideas and theories. It was lived out by everyone. Everyone in the room was doing the work of connection.

All of this is to say that in church, community is unavoidable. That means mess is also unavoidable. If we're going to be the family of God He desires us to be, all of our connection with each other needs to be the overflow of our connection with God.

## Pray

God, thank You for community. You plant me in community to grow other people. I want to be part of a church family and community that is humble, gentle, that experiences unity and bears with one another in love. Empower me to live out all of these qualities, even when it hurts or it's difficult.

### Covenant Challenge

- + Think of someone in our church family that maybe you've struggled to be gentle or patient with, and ask God how He sees them. Right it down and pray that this would be the way you now see them.
- + Send a message of encouragement to someone in your friendship circle from church.
- + Community and connection take work. Find someone you don't know at one of the services this Sunday and introduce yourself.

DAY 2

# The Encouragement of Gathering

**“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together...”**

HEBREWS 10:24-25A (NIV)

**Read: Hebrews 10:23-25**



The stats on church attendance in Australia are sad. Attendance at one service a month is enough to be considered a regular attender, a committed “Christian.” There was a period in my life that I can’t say that I was attending church even once a month. Bitter, offended and hurt, I had given up on church, on “meeting together.” For weeks on end, I was isolated and only growing in bitterness, spinning a good story to anyone who reached out that I was just in a season of “rest”, trying to avoid “burn out.” One night, a group of close friends who embody what it is to “spur one another on to love and good deeds” came knocking at the door. Loving their way through all of the hurt, I realised there was nothing healthy for me in isolation.

The writer of Hebrews is encouraging us here that there is more to our gathering together than what may first meet the eye. Not only should we avoid not gathering together but, when we do gather together, the result of our gathering will be encouragement to one another, where we are spurred on to love and good deeds. Some things are only accessible in the context of personal proximity, and there are things we get in gathering together that we can’t get anywhere else.

I often ask myself this question: if someone arrived at church around five minutes before a Sunday service, morning or evening, what would they see? Would they see a vibrant community of Jesus-loving people, fully committed to their Church? Alternatively, would they see a car park that is still half-empty with people slowly making their way towards the service? I think our answer to these questions is perhaps one of the most important we’ll have to give as an entire church community this year. We need to make space in our lives for what we say we value, and as a church community, we value meeting together. Weekly.

## Pray

Lord, You are my highest priority. I know in gathering together with others, I'll be encouraged, but I want to meet with You more than anything. Empower me to a place of being fully-committed to meeting with You and with other people every week.

### Covenant Challenge

- + Ask God if anything is getting in the way of you committing to regular attendance at Church.
- + Think of one person this week and ask God how you can best spur them towards love and good deeds.
- + If you've noticed that you haven't seen someone at a service in a few weeks, pick up the phone and reach out to them.

DAY 3

# Awe and Wonder

**“...since we have confidence  
to enter the holy places by the  
blood of Jesus...”**

HEBREWS 10:19 (ESV)

**Read: Hebrews 10:19-22**

Christ paid an incredibly high price for us by His blood shed on the cross at Calvary. For many who seek to follow Jesus, this price is often associated entirely with the atonement of their sin and covering the debt for the punishment of humanity falling short of God's glory (see Romans 3:23).

While this is undeniably true for us and not something we ever overlook, what many fail to grasp is that this great price carried with it the weight of this and more. The effect of 'the Fall' (see Genesis 3) was not just the present need to account for man's disobedience and wrongful behaviour, it was the reality of the separation that now exists between humankind and God. From the very beginning, God desired a real and intimate relationship with His creation, those made in His very image. Humanity once dwelt in the presence of our Holy God, walking with God, being face to face with Him, enjoying His presence, but generation after generation were no longer able to enjoy this same privilege after the Fall. No matter the desire to draw near to God, God was Holy, and there were now conditions attached to coming before Him.

However, through the price of Jesus' shed blood, not only are our sins atoned for, but as the writer of Hebrews says, we now have the confidence to enter the holy places by the new and living way that Christ opened for us! (see verses 19 and 20). You and me (yes, you) can come into His Holy presence! We have access to this place of awe and wonder that God's people yearned after for so long, but who were denied access. This is an awesome reality to take hold of, an entirely new paradigm to embrace when it comes to how we approach each part of our relationship with Him. We should never take lightly this incredible privilege and opportunity we now have!

## Pray

Father God, may I never take for granted what Your Son's blood gave me access to in You! May I never become so familiar or accustomed to the privilege and freedom I have each time I come near to You, but may I be filled with the awe and wonder of the very activity I am partaking in as I enter into Your Holy presence!

### Covenant Challenge

- + When you come into the service this week, take a moment to close your eyes and become aware of the very value and weight of simply standing in His presence. Give thanks to God that we can draw near to Him in confidence!
- + Ask yourself this question: "Am I posturing myself in such a way that reflects the reality of being in a church building? Or am I posturing myself in the reality of the awe and wonder of being in the presence of a Holy God?" Ask the Holy Spirit to help you continually take steps towards drawing near to God in reverence and intimacy.

DAY 4

# Prepared for Worship

**“He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord...”**

MALACHI 3:3 (ESV)

**Read: Malachi 3:1-12**

A guest speaker who was with us recently reminded our church again that “our God is a heart reader, not a lip reader!” A religious mindset will typically draw us into projecting toward others what seems ‘right’ on the outside, keeping us focussed on our outward image. However, scripture reminds us that the Lord looks beyond outward appearances and deals with our very hearts (see 1 Samuel 16:7).

One of Jesus’ primary objections towards the religious leaders of His day was that they honoured the Lord with their lips, but their hearts were far from Him (see Matthew 15:8). It was something He could see through, and He didn’t hesitate in calling them to repentance for what He saw.

When it comes to preparing ourselves to enter into the presence of a Holy God in worship, there is arguably no element more important than the posture of our hearts. We can’t perform in His presence! King David affirmed that it is indeed those with clean hands and pure hearts that will ascend the very hill of the Lord (see Psalm 24:3-4).

Today, those of us who are in Christ are like the Levites amongst the people of Israel: we are being built up to be His holy priesthood, built into Kingdom priests who minister to the Lord and who are devoted to the true worship of His name. Like the ‘sons of Levi’, we too are commissioned with the call to worship. We are both encouraged and challenged with the reality that the Lord comes to refine and purify our hearts (see verse 3), so that we might bring offerings in righteousness and purity to Him. He seeks to sanctify our hearts so that we might bring Him the offering He so readily desires. Our responsibility is coming with a posture that equally cares about the nature of our hearts and also continuously seeks to partner with the grace of His refining fire. This partnership will produce a purity and hunger that prepares us to encounter His presence.

## Pray

Lord, I want to prepare my heart to worship You the way You desire and commit to playing my part in seeking to come with a purified and hungry heart to encounter You! I invite You to search my heart and cleanse me of all unrighteousness, that I may bring an offering from the heart worthy of Your name!

### Covenant Challenge

- + Spend time personally preparing your heart before the next time you enter into worship. Exchange those things that are not of Him for the things that are of Him. Take note of the difference it makes in your time of communion with the Lord.
- + Are there ongoing areas where there exists a disconnect in the integrity of your inner person, and the person you present to others? Bring these areas before the Lord, and invite Holy Spirit to cleanse and purify your heart, so that you may worship Him in spirit and truth.



DAY 5

# God with You

**“...Let us go with you, for  
we have heard that God  
is with you.”**

ZECHARIAH 8:23 (ESV)

**Read: Zechariah 8:20-23**

In this passage, the people of God focussed on immediate goals: the next planting of crops, basic shelter for their families, repopulating the deserted city. Zechariah lifts their sight towards a far more glorious future, when Jerusalem will be a light to the world, and people from many nations will stream the city because they have heard that "God is with you!"

As the Israelites look around at their current state, they would have been arrested by an overwhelming sense of the magnitude of what lay in front of them: rebuilding the City of Jerusalem. Even their temple lay in ruin, and possibly their spirits too!

Zechariah calls them to look beyond the present and envision a new Jerusalem. He urges them to build upon the foundation of justice, honesty, integrity and peace. The Almighty Lord promised the Israelites, "I will bring them back... they will be my people... I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God!" Within four years, they had completed the temple, restoring the nation's central reminder of the original covenant between them and God.

Zechariah insists that the nation of Israel, which was in effect a small refugee community, held the key to the world's future. Their new beginning would lead the way to the Messiah, who would bring hope to all!

## Pray

Lord, today when I feel like I am part of a faithful remnant in our society, remind me of Your faithfulness and my inheritance in You! As you said to your people back then, “It may seem marvellous to the remnant of this people at this time, but will it seem marvellous to me?”, help me not to be content with what I have and where I am now, but lift my sights toward the glorious future we have in You, so I may shine with Your Glory and draw all people back to You.

## Covenant Challenge

- + As you press into deeper levels of intimacy with the Almighty God, let your life exhibit the fruit (for some suggestions see Galatians 5:22-23) of His presence.



**WEEK  
FOUR**

DAY 1

# Our Selfish Heart

**“The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? ‘I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.’”**

JEREMIAH 17:9–10 (NIV)

**Read: Jeremiah 17:5–10**

The heart is the conscience of every man and woman. In its corrupt and fallen state, the heart calls evil 'good', and good 'evil'; it is desperately wicked; it is just plain desperate. We cannot know our hearts, nor what they will do in an hour of temptation. How much less can we know the hearts of others or depend on them? Because of the ambiguities of the world we live in and the defects of our wills, we will not do life perfectly or without fault. However, that is not the point.

Trusting in the Lord is shorthand for one who lives in continual obedience to, and dependence upon, Him. To do this requires us to walk closely with Him, being sure to not depart from Him in our heart.

This passage presents us with a vivid comparison between a tree planted in fertile soil on the bank of a river. The tree extends its roots toward the river, and from the river, it derives an abundance of nourishment. It can produce much fruit. This tree is compared to trees standing on dry mountainous places that are isolated, parched and withered; trees that decline bearing fruit.

Everyone wants to be happy, blessed, anointed, and productive. Sadly, too many believers trust in man and depend on flesh for strength, wilfully refusing to pay attention to the One who wills our flourishing. They ignorantly suppose that the Christian way is too hard! The truth is, God's ways and God's presence are where we experience hope. It is in this way that we will flourish like a tree that is forever green, whose leaf does not wither, nor ceases from yielding good fruit, even when the heat comes!

## Pray

Lord, bring to my attention the vanity and emptiness of all other objects in which I have knowingly or unknowingly placed my faith and trust. Lord, You alone are the author and giver of hope: You are Christ in us, the hope of glory. Lord, soften my heart that I may live in continual obedience to You, relying entirely upon You for blessing, confidence and validation.

### Covenant Challenge

- + What in your life, aside from God, have you allowed to become established as an altar of your worship? He is a jealous God; He wants us to make Him our everything! God invites you to surrender your heart, mind and will to Him. Will you allow Him to search your heart and examine your mind?

DAY 2

# Heart Exchange

**“I will give you a heart of flesh  
and make it possible...”**

EZEKIEL 26:24-28 (MSG)

**Read: Ezekiel 36:22-32**



What is this heart of flesh? Is it something we can ask God to redo, like Nicodemus saying, “Can I be put back into my mother's womb?” How do I get this new heart? Do I need an operation?

It's difficult to give up being near people you love. Many people have left family, friends, church and community, and even their country to find a better place to live. We spend a lot of time and money to travel back to see people we love because our hearts are committed to them and, despite the distance, we value them. We can often feel pulled between two forces: perhaps the opportunities afforded in one country, and the familiar pull of another.

Psychologists have even labelled this: “migrant or expat grief syndrome.” Essentially, they are saying that there is an impact from the loss of one's own country and identity, even while adapting to another. The migrant is seen differently: attitudes, accent, dress, skin colour and values mark as them out as different from the norm of their new culture.

French artist Bruno Catalano depicts this poignantly with his half-formed sculptures of men coming out of the sea carrying a suitcase. Try googling it; it's worth a look! These sculptures are a beautiful portrait of what Jesus did for us. He left His Father's presence to come to us. Imagine the gut-wrenching action of leaving God's heavenly presence, putting on human form, and living amongst us. He is the Son of God, and He surrendered His heart out of obedience to His Father, out of love for Him and His love for us. One wonders how He coped!

The verse in Ezekiel is indicating that it is possible for hearts to be changed. God was saying that the cold hard-hearted nature of the people of Israel would be replaced with a warm living spirituality. A sacrifice was required for this, a leaving of old ways to establish new. It could not be done by the Israelites in their own strength. It cannot be done by ourselves on our terms.

Despite their idolatry, the Lord promised that He would restore His people. He was concerned for them and His name's sake, and so He promised to bring them back to their own land. God took the initiative as always. There is a place and a promise for us. He is committed to us; He will restore us.

## Pray

Father, thank You that You were all in when You came to live amongst us. You knew I needed a spiritual change of heart and You gave me that possibility.

## Covenant Challenge

- + Where does your heart need to be made alive?
- + Are you ready to be all in with the covenant family that you are called to?
- + If the answer to above is 'not sure', what is holding you back?

DAY 3

# Friends

**'Be deep-spirited friends'**

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-4 (MSG)

**Read: Philippians 2:1-11**

We know God cares for us! (see 1 Peter 5:7). He cares so much that He took on human identity and form. He even shelved His heavenly home for thirty-three human years. It must have been humbling in a way we can't begin to understand. However, we do understand something of love and sacrifice.

This covenant dynamic of care is what we seek at the heart of our community. It is a divine love, revealed through our relationships with one another. We have a forever-relationship with Jesus. He commits to us for life, this one and on into eternity and we are called to commit to each other as well as to Jesus.

We fail, He didn't. We put ourselves first. He put us first.

We want self-fulfilment. He fulfilled the Father's will for us.

We seek our advantage. He seeks our good.

We seek happiness. He endured the cross for the joy set before Him.

He is the lover of our hearts, and He knows it full well. He knows our need for intimacy. We empower one another as we think of others, as we help one another in hard times; and in the good times, we enjoy one another.

"Deep-spirited friends": it sounds a deeper connection than 'soul mates'! There is a freedom in this connection that transcends emotion, important though that is. Being "deep-spirited" allows the presence of the Holy Spirit in our relationships; it allows the surrendered heart of Jesus to be present in our hearts. He moves in us to empower us to live with one another in ways that reflect Him. These ways bring Jesus' relational qualities into the mix, not just our opinions. We consider one another, we value others, not that others are superior or inferior to us in nature; but we value their strengths and gifts while recognising our limitations. We speak about other people's interests, and we seek to not bore people by speaking only of our own interests.

Jesus emptied himself of His glory and participated in being fully human. But even more than that, He was still fully divine. He took consideration of us to its fullest extent and died on the cross so that we could live. Because of the earthly and cosmic impact that this sacrifice has, we are asked to put aside disunity and move into deep-spirited friendship. Working this out in our day-to-day relationships, challenges our ego-centredness.

## Pray

Jesus, thank You that You can show me what relationships look like. Lord, empower me to build friendships like this.

## Covenant Challenge

- + In counselling, we talk about a person's 'relational style'. What do you think your relational style is? Are you aware of this?
- + What do you think a covenant community relational style would look like?

DAY 4

# Jonathan: Surrendered Service

**“Then Jonathan made a covenant  
with David, because he loved him  
as his own soul.”**

1 SAMUEL 18:3 (ESV)

**Read: 1 Samuel 18:1-5**

When I read these verses about David and Jonathan, a few things stood out.

Firstly, in verse 3, it states that the motivation of Jonathan's covenant with David was love. We don't know how this love started, all we know is that David defeated Goliath just before this passage; an act that showed that David would stand up for God no matter the odds of success. Perhaps David's purity of courage and faith resonated with Jonathan and connected his heart to David's.

Secondly, in verse 4, it says he "stripped himself" (of his robe), further showing that he was self-motivated to give up everything that was rightfully his: his inheritance and rightful succession to the throne, and with that all his power and authority. He willingly and willfully made himself vulnerable.

My third and (to me) most significant observation is: Jonathan took all of this and gave it to David. Jonathan transferred the rights, power and authority of his royal inheritance to David; they didn't go to waste! Jonathan then joined David, offering him life-long friendship, love and service. Jonathan wasn't forced into servanthood to David, and he didn't lose out when he made the covenant with him. Jonathan was a free and powerful man, not a slave to a person or circumstance, much as we are free and powerful. But his love for David motivated him to empower David and David's vision and values. Through his selflessness, Jonathan shared in David's success. How different could that have looked like if Jonathan hadn't recognised where he fit into God's story!

## Pray

Thank You, Father God, for the freedom given to me to offer myself and my services to the work of Your Kingdom. Father, give me wisdom to recognise where my contribution fits best. Thank You for the blessing that comes from serving wholeheartedly and selflessly.

### Covenant Challenge

- + When you first read the title “Surrendered Service”, did you think of duty or love? Does the idea of being surrendered out of love change how you feel about serving?
- + Now think about what you love: people, ministries, causes; and how you could surrender yourself (your time, gifting, talents and resources) to serving what you love. Commit to serve in that capacity for a year.



DAY 5

# Living out of a Surrendered Heart

**“For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’”**

ROMANS 8:15 (ESV)

**Read: Romans 8: 12-17**

A few years ago, I felt so knocked around by the relentlessness of life: the responsibilities of parenting, the stress of relationships, the grind of ongoing physical and mental health issues. I constantly felt confronted by my failures and the inability to “get it together”! Finally, I got to a point where in my head I was saying, “I just want to give up!”

At that moment, I sensed God speaking to me, saying, “No, I don’t want you to give up, I want you to surrender, to Me.” So, I did, mainly because I had not found any better solutions. I pictured kneeling down in front of Him and stripping myself of all my weapons: anger, fear, control, pride; and laying them before Him. Though vulnerable, it felt liberating, and I experienced a peace I hadn’t felt in a long time.

The love Father God showed me at that moment was incredible. Although shame was trying to convince me that I wasn’t worthy, His Grace was greater. As He drew me into greater intimacy with Him, the incredible exchange that He offers became even more real to me: as a child of God, I share in Christ’s inheritance: His rights, power and authority; which gives me the courage to live confidently in the identity that He gives me. Instead of having and being nothing, I am empowered to be all I can be in His strength.

Does that mean my life is all sorted? Do I not struggle with my inadequacies anymore? No, but over the years I have learned to repent and forgive quicker, to yield to His Spirit. I have often witnessed Him turning anger into love, fear into faith, control into hope and pride into gratitude in my heart.

This is the same for each of us. By surrendering our hearts to Him, we gain our inheritance as His children. What a beautiful exchange He offers!

## Pray

Jesus, thank You! By dying for me, You gave me life and a new identity as God's child. Show me how to yield to Your Spirit well, as I accept all You have for me.

### Covenant Challenge

- + Make a list of your "weapons". Prayerfully put them before God and ask Him what He has in exchange for you.
- + If you are struggling with life and the way you deal with things, find someone you trust who can pray this through with you.
- + Consider signing up for one of Riverlife's Streams courses, which can be instrumental in your spiritual growth.

**WEEK  
FIVE**



DAY 1

# Our Creator and Provider

**“But remember the Lord  
your God, for it is he who  
gives you the ability to  
produce wealth, and so  
confirms his covenant...”**

DEUTERONOMY 8:18 (NIV)

**Read: Deuteronomy 8:11-20**

Have you ever worked hard to achieve a specific goal? It may have been completing a marathon, signing a big contract at work, or getting top marks on an exam. The sense of pride and accomplishment when we succeed is a great feeling. Hard work and determination often pay off, but have you ever stopped to think about where you got your abilities? We may excel in sport, but where did that athleticism originate? Psalm 139 tells us that God “knit us together” in our mother’s womb.

God is the Creator of the universe and everything within it. That includes you! He is our Creator, and He is the One who has blessed us with talent, ability, and intelligence. All that we “have” within us has been given to us by God when He created us.

Likewise, the material things we have such as homes, finances, and assets ultimately come from Him, regardless of how we have acquired them. Deuteronomy 8 reminds us that If God didn’t give you the ability, you wouldn’t be able to achieve the success. God is not only our Creator, He is also our Provider. He promises to meet our needs (see Philippians 4:19), and He is aware of what our needs are (see Matthew 6:25–34). God will provide for us because He loves us. What an amazing God we serve!

Our source and our security are found in our loving Father. He has given us all we need for life. It comes from Him; it belongs to Him. We are stewards of His blessings, and as stewards, we need to acknowledge what God has done for us and use His blessings to be a blessing to our world. All we have comes from God. He is our Creator and Provider!

## Pray

Loving Father, thank You for the blessings You have given me. Thank You for creating me with many talents and abilities. Help me to steward what You've given me that I may glorify You and bless my world.

## Covenant Challenge

- + Write a list of all the blessings that God has given you and spend some time thanking Him in prayer and worship.

DAY 2

# God's Well Never Runs Dry

**"...whoever drinks the water I  
give them will never thirst."**

JOHN 4:14 (NIV)

**Read: John 4:7-15**



As a child, I remember playing the game “Monopoly” with my family at Christmas. These were long and intense games which usually led to some form of extortion or blackmail to finally determine a winner. It would start out harmless enough, but as one player began to monopolise the money, the other players would become desperate to hold on to what they had.

Many times, the game of Monopoly reflects real life. We work hard to acquire the things we have, and we don’t want to let them go easily. This is our reality, but there is a greater reality operating that is not limited in such ways. It is God’s kingdom reality.

In His kingdom, there is not any lack, because God’s well never runs dry. In God’s economy, there is always enough, and more, to go around. This is true in a spiritual sense as well as in our material world. All we have comes from God. He is our source, and He is never tapped out. We can share our blessings where there is need without worrying about running out because God will give us more if we ask Him (see Ephesians 3:20).

As we pour ourselves out, God refills us to overflowing (see Psalm 23:5). This is true of our personal resources of time and talent, as well as material resources such as finances. When we give out of obedience and alignment with His purposes, God will bless us with more. Our generosity becomes an act of worship before God.

## Pray

Loving Father, help me become a person of generosity. Will You fill me up so that I may be poured out in my world? I trust You and thank You that Your well never runs dry.

### Covenant Challenge

- + Are there areas of your life that you're holding back in, because you're operating in fear instead of faith? Ask God to show you.
- + Commit to giving of yourself somehow this week. It may be in your time or your finance. When God refills you, write it down as a testimony to His faithfulness.

DAY 3

# Small Things Matter

**“When Jesus looked up and saw a great crowd coming toward him, he said to Philip, ‘Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?’”**

JOHN 6:5 (NIV)

**Read: John 6:1-13**

The heart of our heavenly Father is displayed in this passage, seen in Jesus' question to Philip, "where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" As a father, I take great joy in watching my child grow and conquer new challenges, and it is the nature of our Father to present us, as His dear children, with opportunities to grow in our faith too. We can see this in the next verse (verse 7), "But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do."

Jesus already had a plan, but He didn't just show up, grab the bread and start multiplying it, the same way I don't just carry my 10-month-old around everywhere. I give her my hands, and she walks with my support. Jesus wanted partnership! He wanted it from His disciples, and He wants our partnership as well!

When it comes to partnering with God in our giving, we can look at it in the same way Andrew and the disciples looked at the five loaves and two small fish they were given. Similarly, we may say, "What is this small gift among such great need?" However, our Father doesn't see things the same way we see them. When the small gift, what we see as lack, is surrendered into His grateful hands, He miraculously multiplies it into more than enough!

## Pray

God, Thank You that You love me and already have a plan to provide for all my needs, and the needs of others. Grow my faith to partner with You in my finances, as I surrender to You.

### Covenant Challenge

- + Get quiet before the Lord in prayer and ask Him to show you if there is a way He wants you to partner with Him in giving. Do it!
- + Is there anywhere in your life that seems to be overwhelmed by lack? Ask God to show you the way He sees your situation. Write it down and continue to declare His perspective over that circumstance.

DAY 4

# Sow Generously

**“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.”**

2 CORINTHIANS 9:7 (NKJV)

**Read: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15**

Who would you give your life for? I imagine the list would be short for each of us, but everyone on that list would definitely be someone we loved dearly. We know that this was the case for God the Father, who “so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.”

Exploring this deeper, we learn that it pleased the Father (see Isaiah 53:10,) and brought joy to the Son (see Hebrews 12:2) to freely give to us at such great cost to themselves. That kind of cheerful benevolence only makes sense through the lens of love. This is the same lens that gives depth to Paul’s declaration that “God loves a cheerful giver.”

This is not a statement of manipulation from the apostle to say, “You better give a lot and be happy about it, or else God will not like you!” Rather, because generosity is the nature of God and is at the very foundation of our faith in the gift of the Son, the cheerfulness in our giving is seen as an indicator of Love’s work being accomplished in us!

Now, if we have received this gift in our hearts, the Bible tells us we are new creations (see 2 Corinthians 5:17), and we have become children of God (see Romans 8:16). When we sow generously with joy, it glorifies the Father, It’s like the way a student chooses their Dad for their primary school report on “Who I want to be like when I grow up.” We are saying, “I’m proud of who my Father is, and I want to be just like Him!”

The good news is that this is exactly what we are called and empowered to do (see Ephesians 5:1)!

## Pray

God, thank You for loving me first and making a way for me to become one of Your children through the generous gift of Your Son. Will You bring joy and generosity into my giving through knowing Your love more and more.

### Covenant Challenge

- + From the revelation of His love through His generosity towards you, ask the Lord to show you a way to imitate Him through giving generously with joy. Thank Him.
- + Write down three ways the Lord has blessed you generously and how that revealed His love to you.



DAY 5

# Extravagant in Generosity

**“The world of the generous gets larger and larger; the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller. The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped.”**

PROVERBS 11:24-25 (MSG)

**Read: Proverbs 11:24-25**

As a church, we are on an amazing spiritual journey. We are pressing in for more of God's presence, and we are drawn into an intimate relationship with our Father. Because of this, there are practical implications of making a covenant to God and His church. One of those implications is that we are to be radically generous with everything we have at our disposal, just as God is extravagant in His generosity towards us.

I remember growing up and being blessed by my earthly father. When I was a little boy, my father would encourage me to choose whatever I wanted when we went out to shop. I generally always declined and waited for him to make the decision. Why? Because his desire to bless me was always bigger than what I could think of!

How much more does our Heavenly Father want to bless us so that we can be a blessing to others! When we bless others, we in turn will be blessed. The gospel message is about the greatest blessing and gift of all time, the price that Christ paid for all humankind, through His death and resurrection on the Cross.

So what is our response? How will we bless others with our gifts, our time and our treasure? What will we do to be an instrument of God in creating the future? What's the miracle that Jesus wants to do through you? What is it that you need to surrender to Jesus to allow you to be extravagantly generous, reflecting the generous nature of our generous God? As we keep our eyes lifted high upon Jesus, our thinking is transformed. When we serve more, we take less. When we give more, we need less. When we thank more, we want less.

## Pray

Father, thank You for all that You have given me. Help me to be extravagantly generous with my gifting, my time and my treasure, joyfully investing in the work of Your Kingdom.

## Covenant Challenge

- + What will you do this week to be an instrument of God's love?

**You can find additional resources at**  
*[www.riverlifecyclechurch.org.au/covenant](http://www.riverlifecyclechurch.org.au/covenant)*

If you have any further questions,  
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