

# TERM 4 LIFE GROUP MATERIAL

*Bracken Ridge*  
BAPTIST CHURCH

Brian Heasley

**Be  
Still**



# **RETREAT IN A BOX**

Feeling overwhelmed by the busyness of life? You're not alone. Many of us yearn for a quiet place to connect with God, just as the Psalmist did. That's why we're thrilled to introduce our "Retreat in a Box".

This experience is designed to be accessible for everyone, even if you've never attended a retreat before. No extensive preparation is needed—just a Bible, a pen, and a quiet space. Our detailed guide will walk you through the retreat step-by-step, hour-by-hour.

At the beginning of term 4 (ideally during the school holidays), we're encouraging every Life Group to do "Retreat In A Box" either with one another, OR you can do this at Church Camp. This will be a great way to put what we have learnt through "Practicing The Way" into practice in community. This will also be the perfect way to kick off our new Life Group series, "Be Still". We pray that you are encouraged as you retreat together.

To access all of the necessary resources, please go to [brbc.org.au/events/retreat-in-a-box](http://brbc.org.au/events/retreat-in-a-box) or scan the QR Code below.



# **STUDY 1**

## **Be Still**

The Be Still Series is a five-week course based on Brian Heasley's book, *Be Still: a Simple Guide to Quiet Times* that will equip you to learn how to develop a regular rhythm and deeper daily relationship with God.

In five interactive sessions, with accompanying discussion guides, Brian and friends from the global 24-7 Prayer movement explore some of the creative ways we can connect with God each day, unpacking how to practically develop and grow habits that can cultivate daily stillness in the midst of a busy and fast-paced world.

### **ACCESSING THE MATERIAL**

On the following pages you will find all of the information needed to go through the Life Group Material. There are corresponding videos that can be accessed through our "RightNow Media" account with the church. If you don't have an account, go to [rightnowmedia.org/Account/Invite/BrackenRidgeBaptistChurch](http://rightnowmedia.org/Account/Invite/BrackenRidgeBaptistChurch). After creating an account search the title of the series to access the videos.

If you are unable for some reason to access the material through these different means, please simply email [office@brbc.org.au](mailto:office@brbc.org.au) or call 07 3261 5045.



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO  
PURCHASE THE 'BE STILL' BOOK**

# Be Still.

## Session 1

# Encounter



**Be Still book chapters for this session:**

Ch. 1 (Encounter), Ch. 2 (Distraction)

### **A note for leaders:**

Welcome to the Be Still series. We hope that this resource will equip you and your community to explore how to grow and develop a daily quiet time with God.

Each session of the series is designed to take one hour but can easily be adapted for your group's needs. We recommend allowing time at the beginning to chat and get to know one another, especially if your group is new.

Each session will include a general question to allow groups to talk about what impacted them most – feel free to allow this to shape the rest of your discussion and don't worry if you don't get through all the questions! However, if your group prefers to have multiple questions to work through, these are provided too.

We also recommend allowing time at the end for reflection and to pray for one another, especially as each session requires a little vulnerability.

# 1. Welcome and introduction

5 mins

In the first session of the Be Still series, we'll explore the significance of a regular encounter with God.

## Key verse

*He says, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth". – Psalm 46:10*

Begin the session by opening in prayer.

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# 2. Watch the video

15 mins

## Bible passages

Genesis 3:8–9, Psalm 46:10

## Summary points

- Quiet times are about encountering God
  - Find a location for encounter and find a time for encounter
  - "I don't remember what I had for breakfast last Tuesday, but it was good for me." – Brian
- 

# 3. Discussion questions

25 mins

- Q. What did you find most helpful or most challenging in the video?
- Q. Where is your 'garden': your specific place to meet with God? If you don't have one, where could it be?
- Q. Natalie, Hannah, Kwok and Brian shared different times of day that they encounter God. What time could you carve out for an intentional time of encounter?
- Q. Do you think that it's crucial for every Christian to set aside time every day to meet with God?
- Q. What currently distracts you from spending time with God? Is there a way you could turn these distractions into a new way of praying?
- Q. What practical things could you do to increase your eagerness to encounter God regularly?

## 4. Prayer and practical challenge

15 mins

### Prayer

Finish your time together by closing in prayer or splitting into small groups to pray for one another's specific needs.

### Practical challenge

This week, try setting a timer for five minutes every day to sit and be still in the presence of God.

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## Additional resources



**Be Still: A Simple Guide to Quiet times, Brian Heasley**



**How to have a Quiet Time (PDF)**

Download from the Prayer Course toolshed – [www.prayercourse.org/toolshed](http://www.prayercourse.org/toolshed) – **Resource #2**



**The Lectio 365 app**

[www.24-7prayer.com/lectio365](http://www.24-7prayer.com/lectio365)



# Be Still.

## Session 2

# Scripture



**Be Still book chapters for this session:**

Ch. 3 (Scripture), Ch. 4 (Memorize and meditate)

### **A note for leaders:**

Welcome to session 2 of the Be Still series.

Each session is designed to take one hour but can easily be adapted for your group's needs. We recommend allowing time at the beginning to chat and get to know one another, especially if your group is new.

Each session will include a general question to allow groups to talk about what impacted them most – feel free to allow this to shape the rest of your discussion and don't worry if you don't get through all the questions! However, if your group prefers to have multiple questions to work through, these are provided too.

We also recommend allowing time at the end for reflection and to pray for one another, especially as each session requires a little vulnerability.

# 1. Welcome and introduction

5 mins

In this session of the Be Still series, we'll explore the significance of the Bible and how it can shape our quiet times.

## Key verse

*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.* – Psalm 119:105

Begin the session by opening in prayer.

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# 2. Watch the video

15 mins

## Bible passages

Psalm 1:1-2, Psalm 119:11, Isaiah 59:1, Luke 4:16

## Summary points

- Bible reading is one of the fundamental pillars of a quiet time
  - The Bible becomes embedded in our hearts when we memorise it
  - "The Bible is alive. What a privilege that we can open it at any moment." – Hannah
- 

# 3. Discussion questions

25 mins

- Q. What did you find most helpful or most challenging in the video?
- Q. How do you approach reading the Bible in your daily life? What are the things that prevent you from reading it?
- Q. Brian mentioned the important relationship between prayer and the Bible. Do you lean more towards prayer or Bible reading in your quiet time? How could you challenge yourself to make this balance more even?
- Q. How do you think our perspective of the Bible as the Word of God compares to other faith traditions, cultures, or periods in history? Do we give it enough respect?

- Q. "Meditation is not an emptying, but a filling of one's mind with the word of God." Have you ever tried memorising Scripture, or experienced how remembering Scripture has helped you during difficult seasons in your life?
  - Q. Kwok and Natalie suggested creative ways to memorise Scripture; reflecting on your own personality and experience, how could you engage with the Bible in a new way this week?
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## 4. Prayer and practical challenge

15 mins

### Prayer

Finish your time together by closing in prayer or splitting into small groups to pray for one another's specific needs.

### Practical challenge

This week, pick a Bible verse to memorise. You could even recite it to the rest of the group next week!

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## Additional resources

 **Be Still: A Simple Guide to Quiet times, Brian Heasley**

 **How to pray the Psalms (PDF)**

Download from the Prayer Course toolshed – [www.prayercourse.org/toolshed](http://www.prayercourse.org/toolshed) – **Resource #5**

 **Use the Bible to pray**

[www.24-7prayer.com/praythebible](http://www.24-7prayer.com/praythebible)

# Be Still.

## Session 3

# Wonder



**Be Still book chapters for this session:**

Ch. 6 (Imagination), Ch. 7 (Wonder)

### **A note for leaders:**

Welcome to session 3 of the Be Still series.

Each session is designed to take one hour but can easily be adapted for your group's needs. We recommend allowing time at the beginning to chat and get to know one another, especially if your group is new.

Each session will include a general question to allow groups to talk about what impacted them most – feel free to allow this to shape the rest of your discussion and don't worry if you don't get through all the questions! However, if your group prefers to have multiple questions to work through, these are provided too.

We also recommend allowing time at the end for reflection and to pray for one another, especially as each session requires a little vulnerability.

# 1. Welcome and introduction

5 mins

In this session of the Be Still series, we'll think about how the practice of wonder can inspire and bring fresh life to our quiet times.

## Key verse

*God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.* – Genesis 1:31

Begin the session by opening in prayer.

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# 2. Watch the video

15 mins

## Bible passages

Genesis 1:31, Genesis 28:10-17, Psalm 24:1

## Summary points

- There is creation beauty everywhere but sometimes we just don't see it
  - Developing wonder in our daily lives can help us increase our awareness of God
  - "It's like having that new pair of eyes to see things for the first time, to give us that wonder." – Kwok
- 

# 3. Discussion questions

25 mins

- Q. What did you find most helpful or most challenging in the video?
- Q. How comfortable and/or excited do you feel about using your imagination and practising wonder in your relationship with God?
- Q. What specific things distract you from slowing down to appreciate what's around you? Is slowing down necessary to practise wonder?
- Q. We all have a different interpretation of beauty: where do you most easily see the glory of God?
- Q. Do you think that our self-esteem can get in the way of our encounters with God? Do our own interests and to-do lists distract us from practising wonder?

Q. "We get so busy doing the work of the kingdom that we forget to sit at the feet of the king." – Brian.

Is this true of you or your community? How could you prioritise seeking time to be in God's presence this week?

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## 4. Prayer and practical challenge

15 mins

### Prayer

Finish your time together by closing in prayer or splitting into small groups to pray for one another's specific needs.

### Practical challenge

This week, at the beginning or end of your day, write down anything you saw that pointed you to the wonder of God.

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## Additional resources

 **Be Still: A Simple Guide to Quiet times, Brian Heasley**

 **How to do the Lectio Divina (PDF)**

Download from the Prayer Course toolshed – [www.prayercourse.org/toolshed](http://www.prayercourse.org/toolshed) – **Resource #21**

 **How to pray creatively (PDF)**

Download from the Prayer Course toolshed – [www.prayercourse.org/toolshed](http://www.prayercourse.org/toolshed) – **Resource #7**

 **How to practise Christian meditation (PDF)**

Download from the Prayer Course toolshed – [www.prayercourse.org/toolshed](http://www.prayercourse.org/toolshed) – **Resource #8**

# Be Still.

## Session 4

# Hiddenness



**Be Still book chapters for this session:**

Ch. 8 (Persevering), Ch. 9 (Hidden Life)

### **A note for leaders:**

Welcome to session 4 of the Be Still series.

Each session is designed to take one hour but can easily be adapted for your group's needs. We recommend allowing time at the beginning to chat and get to know one another, especially if your group is new.

Each session will include a general question to allow groups to talk about what impacted them most – feel free to allow this to shape the rest of your discussion and don't worry if you don't get through all the questions! However, if your group prefers to have multiple questions to work through, these are provided too.

We also recommend allowing time at the end for reflection and to pray for one another, especially as each session requires a little vulnerability.

# 1. Welcome and introduction

5 mins

In this session of the Be Still series, we'll explore the value of and lessons that can be learnt from hiddenness.

## Key verse

*"Depart from here and turn eastward and hide yourself by the brook ..."* – 1 Kings 17:3 (ESV, emphasis added)

Begin the session by opening in prayer.

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# 2. Watch the video

15 mins

## Bible passages

1 Kings 17-18, Romans 12:2, Matthew 7:7

## Summary points

- In hiddenness we learn about God and are prepared for the moments when we will be visible
  - We need to learn the art of perseverance in a culture of immediacy
  - "I've seen too much of God to give up" – Natalie
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# 3. Discussion questions

25 mins

- Q. What did you find most helpful or most challenging in the video?
- Q. How well do we cope with the idea of hiddenness in our culture? How well do you cope with the idea of hiddenness in your life?
- Q. Do you have a place of hiddenness with God? Where could you make time and space in your regular routine to develop one?
- Q. In the story of Elijah, there were three years between God's call for Elijah to hide himself and God's instruction to Elijah to show himself. Are you waiting for God's command or response in any areas of your life?



- Q. What things do you need to 'ask and keep asking' for in prayer? How can you encourage yourself to persevere in prayer?
  - Q. Think about your church community. Do you value hiddenness or focus more on platform culture? How could you better celebrate hiddenness and perseverance?
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## 4. Prayer and practical challenge

15 mins

### Prayer

Finish your time together by closing in prayer or splitting into small groups to pray for one another's specific needs.

### Practical challenge

This week, try not to post anything on social media, or stop using social media altogether!

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## Additional resources



Be Still: A Simple Guide to Quiet times, Brian Heasley

# Be Still.

## Session 5

# Mission



**Be Still book chapters for this session:**

Ch. 12 (Mission and justice)

### **A note for leaders:**

Welcome to the final session of the Be Still series.

Each session is designed to take one hour but can easily be adapted for your group's needs. We recommend allowing time at the beginning to chat and get to know one another, especially if your group is new.

Each session will include a general question to allow groups to talk about what impacted them most – feel free to allow this to shape the rest of your discussion and don't worry if you don't get through all the questions! However, if your group prefers to have multiple questions to work through, these are provided too.

We also recommend allowing time at the end for reflection and to pray for one another, especially as each session requires a little vulnerability.

# 1. Welcome and introduction

5 mins

In our final session of the Be Still series, we'll unpack how our quiet times can be the launch pad for sharing Jesus in the world.

## Key verse

*"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." – Matthew 28:19*

Begin the session by opening in prayer.

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# 2. Watch the video

15 mins

## Bible passages

Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 2:1-41

## Summary points

- The relationship we develop with God in our quiet times will affect how we live our lives
  - Prayer is always the birthplace of mission
  - "Who is my neighbour and what does love look like today?" - Natalie
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# 3. Discussion questions

25 mins

- Q. What did you find most helpful or most challenging in the video?
- Q. Brian talks about how the quiet time is the birthplace of mission. What practices could you add to your regular quiet times to inspire you to share Jesus with others?
- Q. Do you think mission is as simple as sharing the love we have found? Do you think that we over-complicate what mission should be?
- Q. What are the answers to Natalie's questions for you?  
Who is your neighbour? What does love look like today (or this week)?

Q. "For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2

What would it look like to live a life that was joyfully sacrificial?

Q. What one thing has had the greatest impact on you from this series? How will it make a difference to your quiet times?

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## 4. Prayer and practical challenge

15 mins

### Prayer

Finish your time together by closing in prayer or splitting into small groups to pray for one another's specific needs.

### Practical challenge

Make a list of five people you would like to come to know Jesus. Commit to pray for them regularly (even daily).

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## Additional resources

 **Be Still: A Simple Guide to Quiet times, Brian Heasley**

 **Run a 24-7 Prayer room**  
[www.24-7prayer.com/prayerrooms](http://www.24-7prayer.com/prayerrooms)

 **Mission**  
[www.24-7prayer.com/mission](http://www.24-7prayer.com/mission)

# **STUDY 2**

## **Advent**

Who exactly is Jesus? What kind of God would come to earth as a human? As Christmas approaches, the season of Advent offers us a chance to reflect on our savior, his purpose, and the surprising ways he invited people near to him. Join pastor Derwin Gray in this five-session Advent study as he unveils King Jesus—the God-man who defied expectations, the king of all creation who humbled himself to serve and die, the friend to sinners who wants to lift us up.

### **ACCESSING THE MATERIAL**

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**SCAN THE QR CODE TO ACCESS  
THE ADVENT DEVOTIONAL**

# Session 1: The Servant King

## SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

**Main Idea:** Jesus came not as a conquering king, but as a suffering servant, a humble savior who wants to rescue us from sin so that we can enjoy a relationship with him forever.

**Head Change:** To know that Jesus came to offer salvation to everyone.

**Heart Change:** To feel love for God himself more than for the gifts he gives us.

**Life Change:** To prioritize God and keep our lives in proper perspective—we should love God and people.

## OPEN

Have you ever asked for a gift that, when you received it, was different than what you expected? How did you react?

As we approach Christmas, the church season of Advent prepares us for the arrival of Jesus—the Messiah. He went by many titles like king, savior, deliverer. But as pastor Derwin Gray explains to us in this five-session series, Jesus, as the suffering servant, fulfilled his calling to rescue us through sacrifice and humility.

## VIEW

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Derwin Gray's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how Derwin answers the following questions.

What sort of Messiah did the Jewish people expect, and how did Jesus fulfill their expectations?

What did Jesus come to do?

Watch Session 1: The Servant King (12 minutes).

### REVIEW

Christmas is less about the gifts we receive under the tree and more about the gift of God in Jesus, the Messiah who came to serve and save us. In this first session, Derwin Gray discussed the suffering servant: God's Messiah sent to serve through sacrifice.

Derwin opened by explaining how the first-century Jews expected their Messiah to arrive as a king and conqueror to rescue them from Roman occupation. But Jesus arrived in an unexpected manner. **In what ways did Jesus's arrival not fit the usual trappings of a royal birth?**

Derwin said Jesus was a different kind of king. Instead of staying aloof in his throne room, Jesus came down to be with his people—as a human being. We call this event the Incarnation. **In what ways is it significant to you that God became a person?**

Derwin asked, "Why did Jesus come to us like this? Why do we celebrate a baby born in a manger this season?" **How would you answer him?**

Instead of coming with blazing chariots and angel armies at his command ready to fight the enemy, Jesus came as a humble suffering servant. He saved through sacrifice. **What does Jesus's sacrifice mean to you? In what ways has his suffering served you?**

Derwin said that "there's not ever been a moment that the King of kings did not want to rescue you from sin and death and evil." **What difference does it make to know Jesus desires to rescue you?**



Derwin pointed out our tendency to enjoy the things God gives us more than God himself. He said, “We worship things and use people instead of loving people and using things.” **When have you found more joy in things than in God? What do you think is the remedy?**

In Isaiah 42:6–7 we see that the Messiah was to extend his invitation of new life to all people—regardless of class, race, sex, age—so they could be forgiven and restored to God. **In what ways was Jesus’s invitation to everyone countercultural? How have you seen churches or individuals imitate Jesus’s open offer to have a relationship with him?**

Derwin described Jesus’s sacrifice on the cross as the greatest gift—God’s presence on the tree, for us. **What do you think of a God who loves you enough to rescue you from your sin? How have you responded to his gift of forgiveness?**

### **BIBLE EXPLORATION**

This series focuses on the majestic kingship of Jesus. The divine second person of the Godhead, creator and ruler of all things, introduced himself in person to his creatures—us—in a most unexpected way. Though he rightfully deserved all praise, honor, and glory, he arrived in humble, disadvantaged, even scandalous circumstances. And, of course, he chose to become human in those circumstances on purpose.

The Bethlehem and Jerusalem of the first century may not feel familiar, but human nature hasn’t changed in two thousand years. Their problems are our problems, and Jesus’s solution to theirs applies equally to ours. He came to rescue all of us from sin, if only we choose him to rule our lives.

Read Luke 2:1–20.

The Christmas story, as this passage is often called, offers glimpses of both Jesus's glory and his humility. **Which circumstances of Jesus's birth reflect the unexpected meekness of the Messiah?**

**Which events describe aspects of his heavenly glory?**

The theme of the Messiah coming humbly originated in the prophet Isaiah but is continued by the apostle Paul in his New Testament letter to the Philippians. In chapter 2, he quoted a hymn about Jesus, which reads, in part, "he emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant . . ." **When you hear "servant," what characteristics do you think of?**

**How does your idea of God compare to Paul's description of Jesus? What's different? Similar?**

Read Philippians 2:5–8. God the Son became a human being, giving up the glories of heaven to live as a lowly man—a servant. In a world that values rank and accomplishment, he chose humility. **When have you been tempted to pursue glory? What encouragement does Jesus's example give you to choose service instead?**

In verse 8, we see how Jesus humbled himself for us. And if being born in poverty wasn't low enough, he went on to die on a cross—the most shameful form of capital punishment—for us. He was willing to go lower than everyone else so that everyone might be able to attain the glory he gave up. **When did you first learn about Jesus's sacrifice on your behalf? What does his death on the cross mean to you?**

Jesus chose to lower himself so we could be lifted up. **In what ways has Jesus restored you from a low place? What kind of influence has he had in changing your life?**

**What could it look like in your life to lower yourself so that someone else could be raised up?**

Now read verses 9–11. In response to Jesus’s humble obedience to die on the cross, God returned him to his rightful place of glory. His name went from a shameful byword to the name above all others. One day, every human ever created will acknowledge him as Lord. **In what ways does Jesus’s lordship encourage you?**

**What is it like to know that your king stooped down to serve you with his very life?**

**In what ways does Jesus’s humility inspire you to serve others? What does service look like in your life right now?**

### LAST WORD

Jesus—the Son of God, creator, sustainer, encourager—humbled himself to become a human being, to live among us, and to die in a humiliating fashion because of his great love for us.

As his followers, we are called to live sacrificially, loving the unlovable, serving despite our status, and suffering for the sake of Christ. Let’s endeavor to live out the words of Isaiah 42:6: “I have called you for a righteous purpose . . . and I will appoint you to be a covenant for the people and a light to the nations.”

### DEEPER WALK

- **Read:** Read the Christmas story in Matthew 1:18–21 and Luke 2:1–38. Spend time meditating on God becoming a human.
- **Pray:** Ask God to open your eyes and soften your heart toward daily chances to love others like Jesus loves you.
- **Memorize:** Memorize Isaiah 42:6, “I have called you for a righteous purpose, and I will hold you by your hand. I will watch over you, and I will appoint you to be a covenant for the people and a light to the nations.”

## Session 2: The Rejected King

### SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

**Main Idea:** Jesus invites us to know him and to find peace through his sacrifice.

**Head Change:** To know that God pursues and will not reject those who accept his grace.

**Heart Change:** To feel God's love and acceptance no matter how far we've strayed from him.

**Life Change:** To experience Jesus's acceptance, trust him as king of our lives, and be secure in his love for us.

### OPEN

When we give someone a particularly special gift, we expect them to respond in gratitude. We may even imagine the specific way they will react to our present. **Think of a time when you gave someone a gift that you thought was special. How did the recipient respond to your gift? Was their reaction what you expected?**

Sometimes the most thoughtful gifts aren't fully appreciated. Though Jesus was rejected by his people and continues to be rejected today, he is still Emmanuel: God with us. He has not rejected or forsaken us. In his great love for us, he continues to pursue his children. In this session, Derwin Gray invites us to experience Christmas as an invitation to meet our rejected king.

## VIEW

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Derwin Gray's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how Derwin answers the following questions.

**Why did Jesus choose to die for us even though he was despised and rejected?**

**What good has grace brought to us?**

Watch Session 2: The Rejected King (15 minutes).

## REVIEW

Derwin opened with the Christmas illustration in which a child excitedly opens up all his presents only to mock and reject them. Jesus, he said, was God's gift to us, and Jesus was rejected. **Have you ever been rejected? How did you react?**

In Mark 15:6–15, we find the story of Pilate offering to release one prisoner. Rather than Jesus, the people called on Pilate to release the murderous zealot, Barabbas, whose name meant "son of the father." Ironically, Jesus was the true Son of the Father, and the people settled for a poor substitute. Sometimes we settle for substitutes, as well, looking to things or other people to fulfill us rather than to Jesus. **What situations have drawn you away from God? What recenters you on God?**

Jesus's rejection fulfilled God's purpose for him. He was innocent but God put him in the place of guilty people like you and me. Jesus died for all of us, who are more like Barabbas than we may dare think. **What do you think about being identified as guilty? In what ways do you see yourself reflected in Barabbas?**

Derwin explained how our word “excruciating” was derived from the Latin word for crucifixion to depict something horrifically painful. Jesus experienced excruciating suffering on the cross. **How does this word study influence the way you think about the cross?**

Derwin reminded us Jesus’s death was not an accident. God planned to rescue his people from sin and death through the cross. Isaiah 53 predicted that the redeemer would be rejected, despised, and a man of suffering. **What comes to mind when you think of God’s overarching, centuries-long plan to redeem you from your sin? How do you respond to such an epic revelation?**

Like children resemble their biological parents, all humans resemble our first parents—we are all rebellious sinners whom God continues to love and pursue. **If you have already accepted Jesus’s sacrifice on your behalf, what convinced you to do so? If you haven’t put your trust in Jesus yet, what reservations do you have in trusting him?**

Derwin described God’s grace as something God does for us—something we could never do for ourselves. God sees our guilt and chooses to forgive, love, and restore us. No matter what we have done, he offers us unconditional acceptance. **In what ways have you been accepted and loved despite past failures?**

### **BIBLE EXPLORATION**

The first-century Jews believed their coming king would be powerful, victorious, and glorious. Jesus fulfilled those expectations, but not in any recognizable way—at the time. Instead, he more closely resembled the suffering servant of Isaiah 52–53.

While the religious leaders during Jesus’s time did not see the connection between Jesus and Isaiah’s prophecy, the writers of the New Testament recognized how Jesus fulfilled the prophecies found in that scroll. Let’s explore the similarities between Isaiah’s words and Jesus’s life.

**Note:** *In a group setting, consider having individual participants or small groups of participants search each set of passages, then come together to compare and discuss. Have your group members use the next set of questions to generate conversation about the passages.*

Use these questions to discuss each set of passages:

**What does the Isaiah passage teach us about God?**

**How does the New Testament passage shape our views about Jesus?**

Read Isaiah 52:13–15, then Matthew 27:26–31.

Read Isaiah 53:4, then Matthew 8:14–17.

Read Isaiah 53:5–6, then 1 Peter 2:24–25.

Read Isaiah 53:7–8, then Acts 8:29–35.

Read Isaiah 53:12, then Luke 22:37, and Hebrews 9:28.

**Having connected Isaiah’s prophecies with Jesus’s life, what new truth about Jesus did you learn?**

**What stood out to you the most from this exercise? Why?**

**How did comparing these Scriptures lead you to worship God more?**

We know from 2 Corinthians 5:21 that Jesus, who “knew no sin” (i.e., he was not a “transgressor”) became our substitute, punished as a “transgressor,” so that “in him we might become the righteousness of God.” When we look at the cross, we see both the judgment we should have received and God’s relentless love for us. Our sin is so deep that we deserved death, but God loves us so deeply that he sent his Son to suffer in our place.

What does it mean to you that Jesus purposely came to suffer on your behalf? What are some ways you could live in gratitude for Jesus's sacrifice?

As Christmas approaches, in what ways could you connect Christ's death on the cross with the baby in the manger? If you were telling someone about God's gift to us in Jesus, how might knowing that the cross was God's loving plan all along influence your explanation?

### LAST WORD

When Jesus arrived to carry out the divine rescue plan, the people rejected him. He didn't look like the savior they had concocted in their minds—instead of a mighty warrior, he was humble, serving, and sacrificial. Just like his disciples and the people in Israel, we also have a chance to choose or reject Jesus.

God loved his people despite their rebellion against him. He loves us, too, no matter how far we stray from him. As Derwin said, God wants us all to know his love and acceptance. He will never reject those who come to him in repentance and joy.

### DEEPER WALK

- **Read:** Read 2 Corinthians 5:14–21. Spend time meditating on Jesus's deep desire to reconcile us to himself.
- **Pray:** Pray for people in your life who have not accepted Jesus as the rightful king he is. Ask God to soften their hearts and open their minds to his saving love.
- **Memorize:** Memorize Isaiah 53:6, "We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the Lord has punished him for the iniquity of us all."



## Session 3: Our Friend, the King

### SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

**Main Idea:** The coming of Jesus revealed God's desire to be intimately acquainted with his people.

**Head Change:** To know that God dearly loves those whom we consider outcasts, marginal, and broken.

**Heart Change:** To feel joy at God's delight in us, which was confirmed by the coming of Jesus.

**Life Change:** To pursue closeness and intimacy with the creator who calls us friends, living out his call to love and serve others.

### OPEN

Think of your best friend. What qualities draw you to him or her? Why do you enjoy spending time together?

Good friends can make all the difference during good times and bad. They know us intimately and love us anyway. They rejoice when we rejoice and hold us up when heavy times come. It may seem impossible to think, but Jesus came as Immanuel, God with us, because he wants to be our friend. As Derwin says in this session, Christmas is meant to remind us that God wants to have a personal relationship with you.

### VIEW

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Derwin Gray's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how Derwin answers the following questions.

Why does God want us to be friends with him?

How does friendship with God lead to friendships with others?

Watch Session 3: Our Friend, the King (9 minutes).

### REVIEW

When Jesus came as a baby that first Christmas, the world didn't quite understand what was happening. But when he grew up and began teaching, his disciples came to realize that he was the Messiah they'd been waiting for. They revered him. But even more amazing to them is that he called them friends.

Derwin said, "Jesus is not a king who wants to be separated from his people, high and lofty. He's a God who wants to be intimate with us." **What does it say about God that he acted upon his desire to become friends with us?**

Jesus illustrated the concept of intimacy between himself and his friends with the picture of a vine. Branches bearing fruit only thrive when they are connected to the vine. Read John 15:5–12. **According to verse 12, what fruit should Christians be producing?**

**What loving behaviors, attitudes, and words are you producing today?**

**What can you do to encourage more godly fruit in your life?**

Lifelong friends usually become more alike over the years. When we stick close to Jesus, allowing him to be a friend who knows us and whom we are getting to know better and better, we begin to resemble him in a variety of ways. Perhaps we enjoy serving others more, as he did. Or we discover we are more courageous about sharing his good news. **How have you changed for the better since beginning your relationship with Jesus? In what ways do you want to become more like him still?**

We are often tempted to deny Jesus's friendship because we do not feel worthy of him. Derwin pointed out that part of what makes it good news is that Jesus is looking for people who are wounded, ashamed, guilty, rejected. He wants all of us, and he doesn't expect us to fix ourselves first. **What, if anything, delayed you from accepting Jesus's love and forgiveness? What overcame your reluctance?**

On the other hand, longtime Christians can forget that Jesus sought the outcasts and rejects. We are called to be like Jesus, welcoming and encouraging everyone to come and see who Jesus is. **Who in your sphere of influence needs Jesus but might not feel worthy of him? How can you reach out and share his love with them?**

Advent focuses on the coming of Jesus as a baby, but his birth should point us to his death. The crucifixion was the culmination of his life, the very reason he came. On the cross, he died in our place, forgiving us once for all and restoring us to new life in him. **To what degree do we have a role in God forgiving us? How can we grow in our understanding of what he did for us on the cross?**

Derwin asked what is hindering us from having a personal relationship with Jesus. Some people struggle with shame and the belief that they need to fix themselves first before surrendering to Jesus. But love doesn't work that way—it is a gift to be received. **Have you, or can you, let Jesus accept you just the way you are? Why or why not?**

### **BIBLE EXPLORATION**

Derwin reminded us that Jesus cultivated an intimate group of followers during his years of active ministry in Israel. The Twelve, as they came to be called, accompanied Jesus as he traveled, teaching and performing miracles. As a leader, he would have expected a group to follow and learn from him. But his followers were more than students—they were his closest friends.

On the eve of his crucifixion, he addressed them as friends one final time.

Turn to John 13 and read verses 1–15. Jesus and his disciples were celebrating Passover, an annual feast day commemorating the Jews' rescue from slavery when Jesus flipped the script and began washing their feet.

**How did the disciples react to Jesus doing servants' work?**

Think of a time when you've witnessed a leader doing menial work or joining employees in their daily tasks. **What did you think as you watched him or her?**

**How did seeing a leader serve influence the way you viewed him or her? In what ways did that event impact your understanding of leadership?**

In verses 12–15, Jesus tells the disciples that he washed their feet as an example of what they should do for one another. **What does Jesus's act of service tell you about his character? In what ways could you imitate his humility?**

Now read John 15:12. Jesus rarely states his teachings as commands, but he does so here: "This is my command: Love one another as I have loved you." **In what ways can someone show love regardless of feelings?**

Jesus's next words in 15:13–14 are both inspirational and motivating: He challenged his followers to show the greatest love possible, then called them his friends. **What is the essence of friendship, according to Jesus? How have you experienced friendship that reflected such devotion?**

Jesus's words foreshadowed his imminent death—he literally would lay down his life for his friends the next day. But rarely are we called to risk our lives for others. **How could his call to "lay down your life" look in your everyday circumstances? How might regularly sacrificing for others be a challenge for you?**

Much of what Jesus taught was difficult to understand, but he often elaborated on his teaching privately to his disciples, a habit that revealed the depth of their friendship. They were special to him. And so are we. **What does it mean to you that the Son of God became human so we could know him in a revolutionary way? In what ways has the Bible, his Word, enabled you to know God more intimately?**

Jesus told the disciples that he had chosen them and appointed them to go and “bear fruit”—that is, love other people as Jesus loved them. **What is one way you can obey Jesus’s command to love your neighbor, sibling, spouse, or coworker?**

### LAST WORD

A king rarely befriends a commoner, but our high king of heaven wants a relationship with you. Jesus is the model of a best friend. He shared his heart, his daily life, his concerns, and his joys. He saw his friends for who they were, faults and all, and loved them anyway.

As Derwin said, Jesus is the friend who heals you, who doesn’t abandon you, who stays with you, and who accepts you as you are while making you the best you were meant to be. If you haven’t friended Jesus yet, what’s stopping you? He already loves you.

### DEEPER WALK

- **Read:** Read John 15:1–17. Spend time meditating on how Jesus demonstrated his love for you on the cross, and how you can, in turn, show sacrificial love to others.
- **Write:** Journal a list of ways you can “lay down your life” without resorting to actual death. What smaller ways can you put aside your own needs and wants in service to others?
- **Pray:** Spend time thanking God for sending Jesus to be the kind of friend who would sacrifice himself on your behalf. Ask him to show you how you can be the same sort of giving, loving friend to others.

- **Memorize:** Memorize John 15:13, “No one has greater love than this: to lay down his life for his friends.”

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## Session 4: The Counter-Cultural King

### SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

**Main Idea:** Jesus disrupted the earthly culture focused on power, self, and excluding outsiders, and now calls us to embrace his new kingdom centered on service, love, and acceptance.

**Head Change:** To know that God’s grace is more important than any earthly power, status, or possession, and to remember that Jesus is with us through every occasion.

**Heart Change:** To feel joy because God loves us and invites us into his family.

**Life Change:** To interact with the world in a Jesus-like, counter-cultural way: with kindness, respect, dignity, and sacrificial love.

### OPEN

When have you participated in or been the recipient of a random act of kindness?

Kindness is out of the ordinary. When we see it, we react in delight, surprise, or wonder. When we behave like Jesus, we stand out among a me-first crowd. Why? Because Jesus is always looking out for others first. With his grace and forgiveness, he turned the world upside-down, and now it's our turn to keep surprising people with selfless love. In this session, we discover Jesus as the counter-cultural king.

### **VIEW**

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Derwin Gray's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how Derwin answers the following questions.

**What was counter-cultural about Jesus's visit with the Samaritan woman?**

**What's the only way we can be accepted into God's kingdom?**

**What does it mean to love ourselves correctly?**

Watch Session 4: The Counter-Cultural King (15 minutes).

### **REVIEW**

"Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright." The familiar Christmas carol paints a deceptive picture of how the birth of Jesus happened. The first Christmas was far from peaceful. It began with a stressful search for a place where Mary could give birth. A week later, she heard disturbing prophecies about her newborn baby from Simeon in the temple. Months later, her little family had to flee to Egypt to save her baby's life. The Christ child did not enjoy a peaceful early life. But he did not come to live a peaceful life—he came to disrupt the status quo, shake things up, and introduce his kingdom.

Derwin said, “Christmas was a holy disruption.” **What sorts of behaviors or events would you like to see disrupted or shaken up so that God’s way might have more room to flourish? What part can you play in disrupting the bad to make way for the good?**

Jesus ate with rejects and sinners and conversed with a woman from the “wrong side of the tracks.” Just eating and talking with certain people sidelined by their ethnicity, history, or employment was enough to get him blackballed by the religious leaders. **Why would Jesus’s acceptance of the marginalized threaten the ruling class?**

**How can you mimic Jesus’s counter-cultural behavior in your own life?**

Derwin said the kingdom of God knocks down barriers of racism, sexism, and other divisive, tribal tendencies. **Who might be considered outsiders today in your world? In your church or faith tradition? What makes them objectionable? How do you think Jesus sees them?**

We live in an imperfect world, full of moments of pain and regret but also sweet moments of grace. **What glimpses of God’s kingdom do you see in your life? Where is it evident that we are not experiencing the kingdom fully?**

God’s not looking for perfect people to invite into his kingdom. We do have examples—like the apostles, Paul, Mary Magdalene, Jesus’s mother—of those who have gone before and lived like Jesus. They weren’t perfect, which is comforting. God gives us grace to help us imitate him. **How you have experienced God’s grace to empower your own daily life?**

Derwin said Christmas is bigger than our cultural tradition because it is connected to our redemption. We celebrate the coming of our savior. **In what ways does your Christmas celebration include thoughts of Jesus’s sacrifice on the cross? How does thinking of his greater purpose make Christmas more meaningful?**



Derwin said that peace is not found in calm circumstances but through seeking God. **How does Derwin's definition change the way you think about peace? In what ways have you experienced peace the way Derwin defines it?**

Christians are representatives of God's kingdom. We are called to love others, including our enemies—a very counter-cultural way to behave. **How can you communicate God's love to your family, neighbors, and opponents?**

### **BIBLE EXPLORATION**

The counter-cultural king died and rose and went back to his throne in heaven. But he sent his Spirit to empower and equip his people with the truth and with the power to love well. We can imitate Jesus and become counter-cultural in our spheres of influence, often through our response to hardship.

Derwin mentioned that Jesus's love brings peace even in difficult circumstances, contentment regardless of comfort, and joy in our eternal hope. Turn to Philippians 3, where we will explore Paul's encouragement to a generous church.

Read Philippians 3:20–4:1.

Paul describes the Philippian believers as citizens of heaven who eagerly awaited their savior who would, by his power, transform their humble bodies into glorious ones. He then encouraged them to stand firm in the Lord because of what they knew was coming for them. **When you feel hope, how does it influence your thoughts? How does the anticipation of something good help you through a difficult season?**

Read Philippians 4:2–3. Paul described Euodia and Syntyche as women who “contended for the gospel” at his side like his other coworkers. He used the same word, coworkers, to describe his colleagues Prisca and Aquila (Romans 16:3), Titus (2 Corinthians 8:23), Timothy (1 Thessalonians 3:2), Philemon (Philemon 1), and Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25).

Euodia and Syntyche were not having a catfight, but they did have a significant disagreement. They were both respected leaders whose argument was so well known that Paul heard about it in prison. **What do you think people outside of the church think of our internal arguments? What message does division within the church send to non-Christians?**

**How might a unified church be a counter-cultural force in your community?**

Read Philippians 4:4–9. Note the seven commands that Paul gives to the church. **Which of these commands is most meaningful to you right now? How does obeying them require you to live counter-culturally?**

Paul encourages the Philippians to correct poor behavior by changing their thinking: if worried, pray with gratitude. Worry focuses on what is wrong, what seems impossible, or what is feared. But prayer puts the burden back on the shoulders of the one who has the power to do something about the problem. **Why do you sometimes struggle to talk to God about your worries? In what ways is praying a counter-cultural response?**

Review verse 8. **How well do the descriptors Paul lists in verse 8 describe our world today? What could it look like to focus on counter-cultural truths instead of the values of our culture?**

Read Philippians 4:10–14. Paul thanks the church in Philippi for sending resources, likely money and goods, to help him. Did you know that Paul was in prison when he wrote the letter to the Philippians? **How does knowing that Paul was in prison influence the way you understand his words in verse 11,**

**“I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I find myself”?  
How do you think you would feel if you were wrongfully imprisoned?**

Read verses 12 and 13 together. Verse 13 may be one of the most well-known verses today. Yet it is often applied wrongly to trivial matters. Paul is celebrating his Spirit-empowered ability to deal with whatever circumstances he experiences, good or bad. **How do Paul’s contentment and faith inspire you? What could it look like to imitate his response when you face a difficult situation?**

Believers in Philippi, even with internal strife among their leaders, generously sent gifts to help Paul in his time of need. Generosity in the face of hardship mimics our loving savior who came to serve us. **In what ways can you, and your group, show generosity?**

Skim back over Philippians 3:20–4:14. **In what ways does this passage remind you of Jesus and his life? What could it look like to apply one of the truths from this passage to your life this week?**

### **LAST WORD**

Part of our mission as Christians is to make earth look as much like heaven as possible. God wants us, citizens of heaven, to turn our earthly cultures upside down. How? Through the power of love. Love offers grace and forgiveness, and love seeks justice. Love brings different people together, breaking down walls that divide us.

Love also results in joy, hope, and contentment—none of which depend on current circumstances. So even when the world is tough, we can be sure that God’s way is still the best way and continue to live with gratitude.

## DEEPER WALK

- **Read:** Read Philippians 4:1–14. Notice the relationships mentioned throughout the passage. Take note of the seven commands from Paul in verses 4–9.
  - **Write:** Review Philippians 4:8 and write out tangible truths in your life that match each of those descriptors. Spend time rejoicing over the blessings in your life.
  - **Pray:** Spend time thanking God for all that he has provided for you.
  - **Memorize:** Memorize Philippians 4:8. “Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things.”
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## Session 5: The Lowly King

### SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

**Main Idea:** Jesus is the king who took on our poverty so that we could experience his riches.

**Head Change:** To know that God, in his grace, has made us heirs of his kingdom.

**Heart Change:** To feel gratitude that Jesus came to earth to invite us into his eternal family.

**Life Change:** To act as God’s ambassadors, his representatives to the world, and communicate his grace to those around us through generosity, love, and joy.

## OPEN

Have you ever received an inheritance, perhaps from a parent or a more distant relative? How did you react?

Inheriting someone's earthly goods can be a mixed blessing. We don't want to experience the death of a loved one, but we are likely very grateful for what we've been gifted. The Bible says we are co-heirs with Christ, inheriting his spiritual riches. But we don't have to wait until we die to join him and receive our inheritance. Eternal life with God starts when we understand and accept Jesus's gift of grace. In this final session, Derwin will examine how our heavenly king humbled himself because he loves us.

## VIEW

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Derwin Gray's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how Derwin answers the following questions.

**In what ways did Jesus become lowly on our behalf?**

**What is Christmas all about?**

**What are we supposed to do with the riches of God's grace?**

Watch Session 5: The Lowly King (12 minutes).

## REVIEW

Jesus left the riches of heaven so he could come to earth as a helpless baby. He voluntarily took on the life of a homeless preacher who invited an eclectic group of followers to join his mission.

In the Incarnation, the eternal, all-powerful God joined with frail, weak flesh to become the perfect, holy God-man. Part of becoming human meant laying aside the glories of eternity and taking on the limitations, sufferings, and poverty of humanity. Jesus knows what it's like to hurt, to want, to mourn.

**What does it mean to you that Jesus can relate so well to your hard times?**

While he may have been poor by society's standards, Jesus remained rich in heavenly treasure that he planned to give away. Second Corinthians 8:9 reads, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: Though he was rich, for your sake he became poor so that by his poverty you might become rich." **How does Jesus's great reversal—king to peasant, rich to poor, heaven to earth—reveal the depth of his love for us?**

Derwin said, "Jesus, the king who owns everything, decides to become so poor that we could become rich in him." **From what you know of Jesus's life, what difficulties did Jesus experience on earth? In what ways do his experiences make him more relatable to you?**

Derwin told the story about the "naked preacher" on his NFL team. Despite his odd methods, the man had some level of success sharing with his teammates about God. **What interesting ways of evangelizing have you witnessed? Were they successful? Why or why not?**

Derwin could not get away from the question, "Do you know Jesus?" It kept coming back to him as he tried to deal with life his own way. But then he decided he needed to know Jesus and the grace he offered. **When did you start to know Jesus? How were you introduced to him?**

Jesus is a study in contrasts. He was born (and lived) in humble circumstances yet he is rich enough to offer us the ultimate inheritance: adoption into God's family. Romans 8:14–17 celebrates how, in Derwin's words, "the son of God comes to earth to adopt us so that we can become the sons and daughters of God." **What does it mean to you to hear that God chooses you?**

If you have any experience with adoption, either as an adoptee, adoptive parent, or family member, share a bit of your story if you feel comfortable.

What parallels do you see between your adoption story and God's choosing us to be his children?

Adopted children gain full status in their new family—no legal difference can be made between them and the natural-born children of their parents. So they are co-heirs, obligated to inherit everything just as if they had been born into the family. God's children, no matter what kinds of brokenness we may come from, all enjoy the fullness of his love. **What has it looked like in your life to remember your status as God's adopted child?**

Derwin encouraged us to plug into Jesus so that our light can shine, meaning we need to rely on Christ for strength, wisdom, and perseverance in every circumstance. **In what ways are you connected to Jesus? Relying on him? Looking to him in your daily life?**

### **BIBLE EXPLORATION**

The lowly babe was born in lowly Bethlehem, placed in a lowly manger, and raised by a couple in lowly circumstances. This baby, however, was the King of kings and Lord of lords. The juxtaposition between his earthly status and his heavenly surroundings serves to highlight the drastic measures Jesus took in his mission to bring us into God's family.

In his sacrifice of laying aside his divine glory for a while, and in his agonizing death, Jesus's generosity and selflessness shine as an example to us. How are Christians supposed to live? As much like Jesus as possible. Let's explore how we can live generously and sacrificially with one another.

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1–5. In his letter to the church at Corinth, Paul tells them the churches elsewhere (in Macedonia) had gone through difficult times and yet showed great generosity. **How did Paul describe the cause of their generosity in verse 1?**

Spontaneous generosity toward others is proof of God's grace working in and through a person or church. The Macedonian churches had been enduring "a severe trial brought about by affliction," yet they responded with "extreme joy." **How do you usually respond to difficult situations? In what ways have you seen a person, or an organization, respond to trials by becoming outward-focused and generous?**

**How has witnessing a generous person drawn you closer to Jesus?**

Paul was not starting a competition between the Macedonian churches and the Corinthian church. More than any amount of money raised, he was more concerned with the heart behind their giving. **What are some wrong motivations for giving? What are good reasons to be generous?**

Read verses 6–9.

Paul wanted to inspire the Corinthians to become generous. He challenged them to be generous by saying in verse 8: "I am testing the genuineness of your love." **What could it look like in your life to show your faith through your giving?**

Generosity is not limited to money. **How else can you give of yourself? What needs in your church can you help meet? In your family or neighborhood or among your friends?**

Read 2 Corinthians 8:9–15. Essentially, Paul is telling the Corinthians to consider the immense generosity of Jesus and look at what he did for them so that they could gain the riches of heaven. **Have you ever linked your giving habits to what Jesus did for you? In what ways is generosity a reflection of God's kindness toward you?**

In verses 10–12, Paul encourages the church to finish what they had started—to follow through on their stated desire to give. Their willingness, he said, matters more than the size of the gift.



When you consider giving to your church, what is your attitude? How do you react when asked to volunteer your time?

See verses 14–15. What is the goal of the Corinthian church giving to other churches?

In your own experience, how have you seen generosity between churches and organizations for the benefit of the community, that no one would be left with too little?

Paul reminds us that giving benefits both the giver and the recipient. But our ability to give and serve graciously comes from God and is modeled for us through the life of Christ. **What are you doing to stay close to Jesus so you can live generously?**

We are generous because God has been generous to us. **What could it look like to be generous with your time, resources, or energy this week?**

### LAST WORD

The lowly circumstances of Jesus's birth are more than the makings for a poignant Christmas story. His choice to leave heaven behind reveals his character and his mission. Jesus's kingdom is upside-down, one where the last are first, the first are last, the poor are rich, and the outcasts are welcome. In his kingdom, the divided are united, the creator befriends his creation, suffering leads to joy, and the undeserving are saved.

Let the grace of Jesus our king spur us on to a generous, grace-filled life that will prove irresistible to everyone around us.

### DEEPER WALK

- **Read:** Re-read 2 Corinthians 8:1–15 this week. Consider what Jesus gave up to give you everything you need.
- **Pray:** Pray for a generous heart willing to give and serve. Ask God to show you opportunities and needs that you can help meet.
- **Act:** Find one or more areas in which you can tangibly give of yourself. For instance, commit to a volunteer position, donate to a nonprofit, or set up a giving account for your church.
- **Memorize:** Memorize 2 Corinthians 8:9, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ: Though he was rich, for your sake he became poor so that by his poverty you might become rich.”





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