



PICTON & WILTON ANGLICAN CHURCHES

Life, Growth and Love in Jesus Christ

8-Week Challenge

A new year is a great opportunity to establish healthy habits and life direction. There are many competing goals and aspirations in our lives, but none are more important than our spiritual life. If we aren't deliberate about our spiritual health, we'll find ourselves drifting and going backwards. We need to take the time to honestly assess our current state of health and be intentional about change. This 8-week challenge aims to help you get fit spiritually – so that you might honour Christ and live for him.

Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

1 Timothy 4:7b-8

Name: _____

Term 1, 2023.

Sermon Series:

Date	Sermon Topic	Bible Readings	Book Focus (page)
29/1/2023	Introduction: Salvation by Grace	Eph 2:1-10 Gen 15:1-21	Honest Self-assessment (4)
5/2/2023	1. Personal Devotion – Bible Reading	2 Tim 3:10-4:8 Deut 8:1-20	Bible Reading (6)
12/2/2023	2. Personal Devotion – Prayer	Luk 11:1-13 Ps 34:1-22	Prayer (9)
19/2/2023	3. Personal Devotion – Godly Living	2 Pet 1:1-11 Ex 19:3-6, 20:1-17	Godly Living (12)
26/2/2023	4. Congregational Loyalty	Rom 12:1-21 Deut 6:1-19	Congregational Loyalty (15)
5/3/2023	5. Personal Accountability (Bible Study)	Col 3:1-17 Acts 2:36-47	Personal Accountability (18)
12/3/2023	CMS Deputation – Craig and Lise	TBC	N/A
19/3/2023	6. Serving With Love	Eph 4:1-16 1 Cor 12:12-31	Serving with Love (21)
26/3/2023	7. Financial Giving	2 Cor 9:6-15 1 Chr 29:1-20	Financial Giving (24)
2/4/2023	8. Commitment to Mission	2 Cor 5:11-21 Isa 43:1-28	Commitment to Mission (27)

Many of the resources mentioned throughout this book can be downloaded or are linked to from <http://pwac.org.au/resources/>.

Honest Self-Assessment (BEFORE)

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. And love your neighbour as yourself.

Matthew 22:27,39

What are you putting before God, why aren't you putting God first? What takes up your time? What shapes your thinking? What do you look forward to? What do you worry about? What do you spend your money on?

After reflecting on these questions, list one or two loves (idols) that you have been putting before God. Are you serving Christ and submitting to him in these areas, or are you serving yourself?

The spiritual disciplines of the Christian life are about living out our love for Christ by living in obedience to his Word and in fellowship with his people. This 8-week challenge will focus on setting healthy habits in these spiritual disciplines in order to re-align your heart in love for God and neighbour.

How much time do you spend reading the Bible? (place a cross)

←—————→
Never lots every day

How much time do you spend praying? (place a cross)

←—————→
Never lots every day

How are you serving Christ / Others?

At Home:

At work/school:

At Church:

Who are you praying for to grow in Christ or to come to know Christ?

My Check-In Partner

An integral part of this 8-week challenge is identifying a friend who will encourage you and hold you accountable to your goals over the 8 weeks. The default is for this to be someone in your Bible study group, but it can be almost anyone who's a Christian. This is a person you can check-in with weekly to share your progress. It's important for this person to be someone you trust enough to be honest with and available enough for you to meet with weekly (on the phone if not in person).

Who are you going to check-in with?

When and where will you have this weekly check-in?

Keeping it in the context of grace

Salvation is by grace, not by works. There is a risk that the '8 Week Challenge' could lead you to rely on your own effort, instead of on the finished work of Christ. If you view your faith as only what you do (our works), you will be relying on yourself and not putting your trust and confidence in Christ. That would be disastrous.

Alternatively, you could 'rely on God' and do nothing yourself, and that would be equally disastrous.

Paul's advice in Philippians 2:12-13 is this:

Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose

This '8 week challenge' will aim to fix our eyes and lives on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to motivate us to make every effort to live a disciplined Christian life in thanksgiving and obedience to him.

1. Personal Devotion – Bible Reading

Our primary goal as a Church is for each person to know and follow Jesus Christ. Receiving forgiveness through Jesus' death in your place leads to new life and a relationship with God. The fruit of this will be a joy in and personal commitment to Jesus Christ, expressed in regular prayer and bible reading, and in godly living (the first three topics in this 8-week challenge). We each need to take responsibility for our own Christian growth by making these a priority.

You may not always remember what you had for your last meal, but you'd certainly notice if you stopped eating. God's Word is the spiritual food that sustains us. It doesn't only contain the message of forgiveness and life in Jesus Christ that converts us, it also contains God's wisdom for life and his instruction for Christian living that sustains us to eternal life. It's nonsense to think we could love and trust a friend but never bother to listen to what they say, and it's nonsense to say you love and trust in Jesus Christ but that your Bible sits dusty and unused on the shelf!

Read Deuteronomy 8:3:

'Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.' (read all of Deut 8 for context if you have time).

Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17.

¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Extension readings: 1 Peter 1:22-2:3, John 6:32-40.

Reflection:

How is reading the Bible like eating?

What is the most important thing the Bible is good for?

What other uses can we make of the Bible? What is the significance of it being 'God breathed'?

Diagnostics:

When / how often do you read your Bible?

What methods / times / skills have you found helpful / unhelpful in the past in creating a regular Bible reading habit?

Ideas / Resources:

Sometimes reading the Bible can seem a dry and distant activity. How can we make it a joy, not just a discipline? Introducing a pattern of reading and reflection, or meditation, will help us take to heart and put into practice what we're reading and make the process much more rewarding. Something like the Swedish method can be helpful, so can journaling. Setting realistic goals is also important, perhaps reading a paragraph a day is a good place to begin? The book '**One to One Bible Reading: A Simple Guide for Every Christian**' by David Helm is a good resource to draw from. '**How to Read the Bible Better**' by Richard Chin is also helpful. The Daily Bread devotionals can be a real help or download the Bible app and sign up to daily readings.

Resolutions:

What will you resolve to try?

Examples: eg1) read a paragraph a day as soon as I wake up and write in journal one question arising (?), one surprising observation (!), and one point of action (->); eg2): aim to read a paragraph of Bible at lunchtime each week day and message my favourite verse and a question to my friend; eg3) read short passage before daily commute and spend commute reflecting on it and praying, eg4) sign up to daily email devotional and read bible and comments in email inbox (perhaps Bible society).

Keeping Track:

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Prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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How have you gone in working towards your other spiritual goals?

What impact have these things made on your life, relationships and relationship with Christ this week?

What goal / challenge would you like me to ask you about next time we get together?

Optional Article:

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/why-i-still-read-the-bible/>

2. Personal Devotion – Prayer

Prayer is an expression of dependence and trust in God. He is the creator and sustainer of the universe, in control of everything, so he is powerful to do something about our circumstances. He is also our loving heavenly Father who loves us so we can turn to him with every circumstance in our lives. Turning over our anxieties and worries, bringing our prayers and requests to the all-powerful God is a wonderful privilege and a great relief. God loves to hear and answer our prayers – but he gives us what is best, not necessarily what we ‘want’ every time – this can be difficult.

Read Luke 11:1-13

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples." ²He said to them, "When you pray, say: "'Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. ³Give us each day our daily bread. ⁴Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.'" ⁵Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; ⁶a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' ⁷And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' ⁸I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need. ⁹"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. ¹¹"Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? ¹²Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? ¹³If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Reflection:

Whose interests are the focus of the first half of the Lords Prayer (v2)? What about the second half (v3-4)?

How might this order shape the way we feel, and our view of our own problems, as we pray?

What things from verses 5-13 can give us confidence to be bold in prayer?

Diagnostics:

When / how often do you pray?

How often are you praying for God's kingdom and the needs of others rather than just yourself?

What methods / times / skills have you found helpful / unhelpful in the past in creating a regular prayer habit?

Ideas / Resources:

It's helpful to have a method with prayer. Maybe lists for days of the week, or a photo album of people to pray for with the kids, maybe associating particular prayers with places or times of the day. Using prayers from the Bible, or set prayers from the prayer book or other places can also help. I have found the PrayerMate app very helpful (<https://www.prayermate.net/>)! Some good books are Don Carson's, 'Call to Spiritual Reformation', Paul Miller's, 'A Praying Life', or 'Growing in Prayer' by Stephen Shead.

Resolutions:

What will you resolve to try?

Examples: eg1) write the days of the week on a notepad and write peoples names to pray for on each day. Leave your notepad at the breakfast table to prompt you to pray; eg2) Pray for first 10 minutes of your commute to work each day, using each line of Lords Prayer as inspiration for prayers; eg3) Download the prayermate app, enter a list of friends and family to pray for and subscribe to various prayer feeds for mission etc... Let it prompt you with what to pray for each morning when you wake up.

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Optional Article:

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-paradox-of-prayer/>

3. Personal Devotion – Godly Living

We have been saved for a purpose: to do the good works God has prepared in advance for us to do (Eph 2:10). We strive to live godly lives, not in order to be saved, but as we live out our salvation – trusting that God's way is best. In Romans 8 we read that God works for the good of those who love him. And what is that good? That we might be conformed more into the likeness of Christ. We strive to live godly lives, to live more like Christ – out of thankfulness for our salvation, obedience to our God, and because we know it is for our ultimate good! Godly living involves making wise and right decisions, but also the formation of character – most particularly, the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23).

Read 2 Peter 1:1-8

¹Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: ²Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Extension Readings: Romans 8:28-30, Galatians 5:13-26.

Reflection:

What does God use his power to give us (v3)?

What else has God given us (v4)?

What difference would it make to your life, and the lives of those around you, if you had each of the characteristics in verses 5-7?

Diagnostics:

What areas of character and godly living have you been working on and improving in?

What areas do you need to start working on / find a struggle?

Ideas / Resources:

Sometimes it can feel vague to talk about Christian godliness in abstract. It might be more helpful to think about your relationships and how you treat the people around you. Ask the people around you how you can improve the way you love them and treat them. Start praying about how you can consider other people's needs before your own and think about practical ways of doing that. A helpful and practical book in this area is 'You can Change' by Tim Chester.

Resolutions:

What will you resolve to try?

Examples: eg1) I'm going to try to do one thing each day to show my husband / wife / family that I love them; eg2): each time I start to feel angry I'll go for a walk around the block and pray for patience and self-control ; eg3) I'm going to write down 3 things to thank God for every evening on a notepad.

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Optional Article:

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/meditation-on-the-scriptures-the-key-to-personal-transformation/>

4. Congregational Loyalty

Commitment to Christ means commitment to his people. Church is variously described in the Bible as a body, a building and a family. Each of these analogies' points to the fact that we need each other. That's why we're committed to gathering regularly with a particular group of Christians. It's not about 'getting your church fix' but about doing life together with and for this group of Christians. Church is when we come together to worship God, hear his word preached, and encourage one another.

Read 1 John 4:9-11:

⁹This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

Read Romans 12:9-16

⁹Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. ¹¹Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. ¹²Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Extension readings: Hebrews 10:19-25.

Reflection:

How has God showed his love among us?

What is the appropriate response to God's love?

What are some of the ways in Romans 12 we can be 'devoted to one another in love'?

Diagnostics:

How devoted are you to faithfully meeting with your Church family? How many times have you attended Church (this month/term)?

Are there any aspects of the passage from Romans 12 that you find difficult or perhaps never even think to do?

Ideas / Resources

When you are making the decision to attend or not attend Church on any given Sunday, it's easy to think only about the impact it makes on you: 'I need some encouragement this week', 'I'm tired', 'I've got a lot to get ready for Monday' etc... But going to Church is not a 'consumer' activity – it's actually about loving and serving others. Think about the encouragement you can bring to others by your presence, think about the love you can show them by asking them how their week has been, or pray for them as they prepare for a big decision. For more info you might find the 'Ministry of the Pew' discussion paper helpful or 'Six Steps to Loving Your Church' from Matthias Media.

Resolutions:

What will you resolve to try?

Examples: eg1) I'm going to try to make it a priority to be at Church every week this term; eg2): I'm going to make it a priority to ask 1 person each week at Church how they are going in their faith and offer to pray for them ; eg3) I'm going to call 1 person from Church each Wednesday evening to say hello and to share with them a Bible verse that has encouraged me.

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What impact have these things made on your life, relationships and relationship with Christ this week?

What goal / challenge would you like me to ask you about next time we get together?

Optional Article:

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/tune-your-heart-for-praise/>

<https://gotherefor.com/offer.php?intid=14837>

5. Personal Accountability (Bible Study Groups)

Joining a bible study group will enable you to investigate the bible in an interactive way, care for and be cared for by a group of close friends and keep one another accountable as you seek to grow in the knowledge of God and in Christian living. Joining a Bible study group might not be possible for everybody, perhaps because of a busy stage of life, or health, or some other reason. But it's important to find a place of deep Christian fellowship, encouragement and accountability. That could be through a prayer triplet, or meeting with a friend to read the Bible together. We want to encourage everyone to consider joining a group or finding a place of encouragement and accountability in your faith.

Read Colossians 3:12-17:

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11:

⁷ The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. ⁸ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Extension Readings: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Acts 2:42-47.

Reflection:

What do these verses from Colossians and 1 Peter say about our relationship to one-another?

As you look at these verses, what ought to be the focus of what we do when we get together?

How would you respond to a person who claims to be a Christian but doesn't make either Church or Bible study group a priority?

Diagnostics:

How deep is your relationship with your Church family? How have you offered hospitality lately?

What things hinder you having a deeper relationship with your Church family?

Ideas / Resources:

Most of the Bible is written with the plural pronoun. It was never intended that the Christian life be an individual pursuit. Rather, when someone comes to faith in Christ they are born again and adopted into the family of God through Jesus Christ. The Christian life is lived in the community of a local Church fellowship and in relationships of love and trust. A Bible study group is not the only way to express this community, but it is a good one.

Resolutions:

What will you resolve to try?

Examples: eg1) I'm going to join a Bible study group; eg2): I'm going to ask my friend to meet me for coffee regularly and pray together ; eg3) I'm going to try to get to know the people from Church better by having them round for dinner.

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Optional Article:

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/encouragement-easy-rare-and-powerful/>

6. Serving with Love

Every member of Christ's 'body' has different skills and passions for serving the whole. We all give of our time and energy in big and small ways. The paid minister's job is not to 'do the work' but to 'equip [God's] people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up' (Eph 4:12). The most important thing isn't 'what gifts I have', but how I use my gifts to serve and build up the body. Gifts are simply the things I can do and can be anything from sewing to bricklaying, from playing the piano to teaching a lesson.

Read Ephesians 4:11-16

¹¹So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Read 1 Peter 2:9-10:

⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Extension readings: Romans 12:1-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31.

Reflection:

What is the goal of the 'works of service' that God's people are being equipped for (v12,13)?

Who is assigned to do the equipping and who is assigned to be equipped for doing the works of service?

If the Church is like a body made up of different parts, what does that mean for the way we work together?

Diagnostics:

What are the ways you serve the body of Christ with the goal of building it up into faith and knowledge of Christ?

What opportunities do you see to serve the body of Christ this year? Will you need to step back from doing something else in order to free up time for this (there are only 24 hours in the day)?

Ideas / Resources:

The most important ways of serving at Church are often the informal ones: welcoming newcomers, praying for those struggling, taking initiative to care for people, stepping in when you see a need. However, there is always a roster to fill and formal roles that need filling. It can be useful to identify your 'gifts' but its much more important to focus on developing godly character and habits and to find out what the needs of the Church are. If you're not willing to take out the garbage, then you probably don't have the right attitude to preach the sermon. Spiritual gifts are best discerned by exercising them by serving in Church, rather than trying to discern them by filling out a survey. Having said that, you might like to use the 'opportunities to serve' discussion paper to help you think through how to serve in Church or consult the big list to get ideas (both available on our Church website here: pwac.org.au/resources/).

Resolutions:

What will you resolve to try?

Examples: eg1) I'm going to offer myself to help as a Kings Kids leader, SRE Teacher or Kids Club leader; eg2): I'm going to look out for practical ways to serve others before and after church and say hello to newcomers; eg3) I'm going to consult the discussion paper and big list of ideas of ways to serve on the church website and go from there...

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Optional Article:

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/the-ministry-of-public-bible-reading/>

7. Financial Giving

We encourage members to give generously and regularly to both our local Church budget and the missionaries and causes we support. The Scriptures provide several reasons why God's people should give: response to God's generosity (2 Cor 8-9); recognition that our wealth and possessions belong to God (1 Chron 29:10-16); and sharing in God's mission (Phil 1:3-7). All of us contribute to the upkeep of our properties and resources and furthering our goals. Our aim is that these resources and these goals serve to glorify God and further his mission and we seek to be as transparent and accountable as possible in this.

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-11:

⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. ⁷Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever." ¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

Read 1 Chronicles 29:14-17:

¹⁴"But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand. ¹⁵We are foreigners and strangers in your sight, as were all our ancestors. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope. ¹⁶LORD our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a temple for your Holy Name comes from your hand, and all of it belongs to you. ¹⁷I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things I have given willingly and with honest intent. And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you.

Extension readings: 2 Corinthians 8:1-15, Philippians 1:3-7.

Reflection:

What has God's generosity to us looked like? What reasons do we have to be thankful to him?

What principles for giving do you see in these passages?

If the Old Testament standard was a 10% 'tithe' what do you think generosity might look like in your circumstances?

Diagnostics:

What percentage of your income do you give away (not just to Church, but combined to other causes)?

Are you giving sacrificially or just giving out of your 'leftovers'?

Ideas / Resources:

Giving to Church will not earn you any credit or favour with God. We want you to consider giving to Church because you see it as a worthwhile investment and something you want to do, not an obligation. We aim to be wise, godly and transparent with our use of money and the parish council makes our Church budget and financial books available at our AGM meeting and at any time to those who ask. Perhaps you could consider including our Church in your will. Large one-off gifts can be given for a specific purpose, or for general use and are often very helpful in accomplishing large projects. It can be a very helpful exercise to create a household budget and consider how this budget reflects your priorities in life. An excellent book on the topic of greed and generosity is 'Beyond Greed' by Brian Rosner.

Resolutions:

What will you resolve to try?

Examples: eg1) I'm going to prayerfully evaluate my personal budget and consider how I can be generous at Church, in supporting mission, and in caring for the needy; eg2): I'm going to start giving via direct debit to Church instead of just ad-hoc cash in the bags when I can ; eg3) I'm going to enquire about sponsoring a child through Compassion or becoming a regular supporter of the Flanagan's (our CMS link missionaries in Tanzania). Eg4) I'm going to speak to one of the wardens about how to include a gift to Church in my will.

Keeping Track:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Bible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attend Bible Study:			<input type="checkbox"/>	Attend Church:			<input type="checkbox"/>

Weekly Check-In:

How have you gone at being regular in reading your Bible and praying this week?

How have you gone in working towards your other spiritual goals?

What impact have these things made on your life, relationships and relationship with Christ this week?

What goal / challenge would you like me to ask you about next time we get together?

Optional Article:

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/god-or-money/>

8. Commitment to Mission

As a community that knows and experiences the love of Jesus, we are compelled to share that love with others (2 Cor 5:14). This will mean engaging with our neighbours and workmates as we seek to share the gospel with them. It will also mean partnering with our link missionaries, both in prayer and financially as they take the gospel to the world.

Read Colossians 4:2-6:

²Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. ³And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. ⁵Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. ⁶Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:11-21:

¹¹Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade others. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. ¹²We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. ¹³If we are "out of our mind," as some say, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ¹⁴For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. ¹⁵And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. ¹⁶So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Extension readings: Matthew 28:18-20.

Reflection:

What is the focus of Paul's prayers in Colossians 4 for himself and for his readers?

How does the transforming power of the gospel in our lives change the way we view the world and everyone in it? How will that change the way we relate to other people?

What is the message that we have received for ourselves and are now entrusted with to pass on to others? Try to explain this message out loud in a way that anyone you meet could understand it and perhaps be persuaded by it.

Diagnostics:

What stage are you at in being an ambassador for Christ (we're all at different stages)?



No-one knows I'm a Christian yet.

I have invited a friend to come to Church with me.

I have explained why I'm a Christian when my friend asked me.

I often explain the gospel and call people to put their trust in Christ.

The best place to start is in prayer – who have you been praying for to come to know Christ?

Ideas / Resources:

It's helpful to set achievable goals in mission. Pray about what the appropriate next step for you might be. It's important to remember that we're a team, and you can be supporting others who are engaged in mission too (like our link missionaries). But we all have a responsibility to be an ambassador for Christ

because of the message we have received in some way or other. An excellent an easy to read book on Mission is 'Marks of a Messenger' by Mack Stiles.

Resolutions:

What will you resolve to try?

Examples: Eg1) I'm going to have a go at explaining to my Christian friends why I'm a Christian. eg2) I'm going to ask my workmates what they did on the weekend, and then when they ask me back I'll explain that I went to Church and see where the conversation goes; eg3): I'm going to pray for 3 friends, and aim to invite two of them to come to Church with me at some point over the next few months ; eg4) I'm going to pray for opportunities to explain to my friends why I trust in Christ and practice my 2 minute explanation so I'm ready for when the opportunity arises.

Keeping Track:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Bible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prayer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Weekly Check-In:

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Optional Article:

<https://au.thegospelcoalition.org/article/growing-gospel-workers/>

What have been the benefits / hardships of doing this 8 week challenge? If you have some helpful feedback on the process, please pass it on to Ben and Kate.

Make a list here of all the resolutions you have made throughout the 8-week challenge in one place?

This list of resolutions might be a bit overwhelming, and you can't just add extra things to your life without thinking about what you won't do in order to fit it in. What will you be dropping out of your life in order to focus on these priorities (eg: time on social media, TV watching, work, sport, etc...)?

There still might be too many resolutions for you to really focus on – what will be your one or two priorities to work on this year to establish a healthier spiritual life?

When are you going to meet with your 'check-in partner' to review these longer term goals flowing out of the 8 week challenge?

How are you going to keep the momentum going in your Christian life now that the 8 week challenge is over?



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Life, Growth and Love in Jesus Christ