

THE GENEROUS HEART

• A BIBLE STUDY FEAST FOR ALL •

INTRODUCTION

The Generous Discipleship Bible studies 'The Generous Heart' are formed around Psalm 100, focusing on a different theme for each session. Although they refer to financial giving, their wider focus is on the stewardship of our *time, talents, gifts* and *finances*.

Key Scripture: *Psalm 100: 1–5*

A psalm. For giving grateful **PRAISE**.

SHOUT for joy to the Lord, all the earth.

WORSHIP the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.

KNOW that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

ENTER his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his **LOVE** endures for ever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

SESSION STRUCTURE

The sessions are structured around different courses of a meal so that activities can be selected that are appropriate to the group setting and available time. There is a lot of flexibility regarding planning, and the additional courses of the Bible study meal could be used as part of the Sunday meeting, within sectional rehearsals or for additional coffee-catchups. They are predominantly planned to work within a small group setting. The basic structure of the Bible study is as follows:

These are the courses that form the basic structure of each session and ideally need to be completed in order to gain the most from the Bible study.

APPETISER

This course provides the background information for the group leader. The 'Appetiser' does not need to be shared with the whole group and most of the teaching is covered in the 'Today's Special' course.

TODAY'S SPECIAL

This section takes the form of a teaching clip for the whole group to watch. It introduces the theme and shares the main Scripture for the session. It also links it with Psalm 100 and the wider Generous Discipleship project.

STARTER

There are generally two 'Starters' to choose from for each session. They link to the theme and give the group the opportunity to ease into the session. They're just a bit of fun!

MAINS

Containing the main discussion for the session, the 'Mains' course takes a more traditional Bible study approach with a range of questions linked to the key Scripture.

DESSERT

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This course gives the group an opportunity to personally reflect on what they have discovered. There are also two pieces of reflective music as options to use within each session.

The following courses are also available to use at the discretion of the group leader, as part of other groups with the corps, or included in Sunday worship.

SIDES

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In each Bible study there are two 'Side orders' available that explore themes from the Scripture in more detail. These are optional and give the group leader the freedom to make the right choices for their group considering their interests or time restraints.

FOR SHARING

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In each session there is a more creative option for those who would like to try something a bit different. It may not be possible to complete these activities within the session time, but they would be perfect for a group to gather together and complete in a relaxed setting.

TAKEAWAY

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The 'Takeaway' handout provides a space for participants to take notes and includes key quotes or questions for the session.
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SESSION OUTLINES

Session 1 - PRAISE

This session sets the scene for the Generous Discipleship Bible studies and focuses on the whole of Psalm 100:1-5. It takes the form of a set menu to ensure all aspects are covered consistently.

Session 2 - SHOUT

'Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth.' (v1)

This session is based on the story of the Rich Young Ruler found in Mark 10:17-24. It asks us to consider whether our lives reflect our 'shout' of allegiance to King Jesus and to think about the obstacles that stand in the way of our giving.

Session 3 - WORSHIP

'Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.' (v2)

This session takes us into the Old Testament where we meet the woman of Shunem (2 Kings 4:8-17). She sees an opportunity to give and expects nothing in return. In this session we consider the motivation for our giving and the relationship between worship and service.

Session 4 - KNOW

'Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.' (v3)

In Session 4 we consider a lesser-known chapter in the life of David (1 Samuel 25). We meet foolish Nabal who cannot see God's part in his wealth. We delve into David's frustration when others don't give in the way he would like, and we meet the wise, generous peace-maker Abigail.

Session 5 - ENTER

'Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.' (v4)

Session 5 focuses on the abundant giving of Mary as she poured expensive perfume on the feet of Jesus (John 12:1-11). We consider the reactions of those around her and reflect on what abundant giving looks like in our own lives.

Session 6 - LOVE

'For the Lord is good and his love endures for ever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.' (v5)

Through the story of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, the themes of Psalm 100 are considered. The focus of this session is on the power of God to do amazing things with whatever we have to offer. There are opportunities for the corps to reflect on how they can serve the local community and focus on the positive ways God can use their 'five loaves and two fish'.

All Bible references are NIV unless stated otherwise