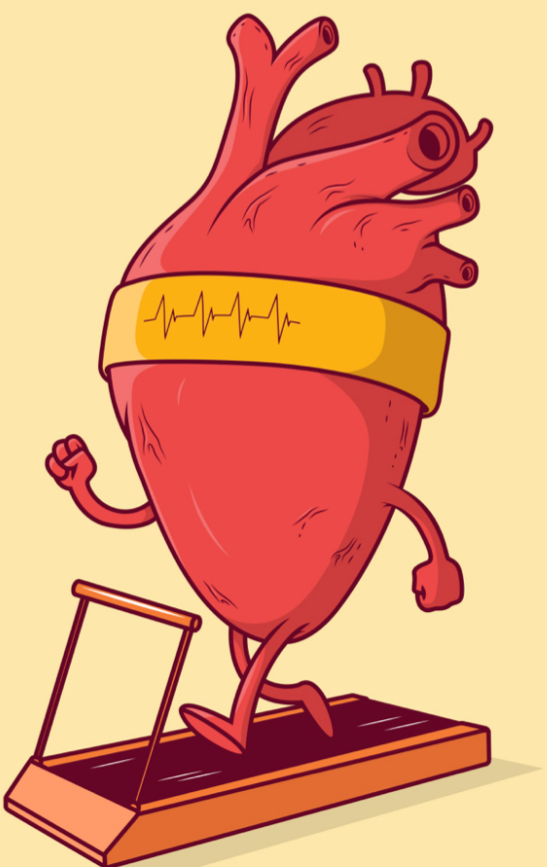


**ALL
YOUR
HEART**



GROUP MEMBER GUIDE

ALL YOUR HEART: INTRODUCTION

Jesus is a man for our complicated times. When he was quizzed by a religious expert about which of the 600+ Old Testament commands was the greatest, he answered with simple alacrity, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart...this is the first and greatest command” (Matthew 22:37-38). Most people know that he followed that up with a second command to “love your neighbour as yourself”. Then he rounded out his answer to the devious inquisitor by saying that the whole Old Testament body of instructions hangs on these two straightforward commands.

Despite Jesus’ simple and forthright answer, loving God with all that we have, and loving our neighbour as ourselves, requires much of us: all our heart, all our soul, all our mind and all our strength. The commands are simple to hear, but rather involved when they are practiced. That’s what we’ll be looking at this term.

And because these two great commands are to be practiced, we will be dovetailing into the series a further look at the spiritual practices or godly habits that we first investigated a few years ago. Each week we will unpack a little about these two great commands. And then we’ll have a chance to read or listen to one or two of the short chapters from the *Godly Habits* booklet. In so doing, we don’t just want to talk about loving God and neighbour, we want to start doing it. With all our hearts!

May God bless you in this endeavour this term.

STUDY TIMETABLE

Use these studies in your group as you see fit, but here's a suggested timetable.

Sunday Sermon Date	Topic	Midweek (growth group)	What?
Sunday 5 February	Love the Lord your God	Term 4 Leader Session Wed 8 February	
Sunday 12 February	...with all your heart	13-16 February	Study 1
Sunday 19 February	...with all your soul	20-23 February	Study 2
Sunday 26 February	...with all your mind	27 February to 2 March	Study 3
Sunday 5 March	...with all your strength	6-9 March	Study 4
Sunday 12 March	Love your neighbour as yourself #1	13-16 March	Study 5
Sunday 19 March	Love your neighbour as yourself #2	20-23 March	Study 6
Sunday 26 March	The whole-hearted life	27-30 March	Study 7
Sunday 2 April	Celebration Sunday	3-6 April	Bonus Study

STUDY 1: LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART

Start

What are some things that you love with all your heart?

Read

Deuteronomy 6:1-9; 1 John 4:7-12.

Think & talk

- 1. According to John, what is at the centre of the Christian faith? What is at the centre of our response to all that Jesus has done for us?**

- 2. Some people believe that the Old Testament was about stone-willed obedience and the New Testament is all about whole-hearted love. How do the passages above counter this?**

- 3. Read 1 John 5:1-5. What do these verses add to the concept of loving God?**

Godly habits

Each week this term we are going to read (or listen) to a chapter of the *Godly Habits* booklet. This will be part of the way we apply Jesus' commands to "Love the Lord with all our hearts..." and "Love our neighbours as ourselves...".

So [read](#) or [listen](#) to the [Introduction: Hearts & Habits](#), and discuss:

- What is the connection between loving God with our hearts and practising godly habits?
- Why would you give godly habits a go? What would stop you from giving them a go, or persevering with them?

Pray

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for loving us first. And thank you for sending your Son to live among us and die for us as a sacrifice for our sins.

Renew our hearts so that they are always warm towards you, and so that our obedience is grounded upon love for you.

And enthuse us to give godly habits a go this term, so that you might work within us to make us more like Jesus.

Amen.

STUDY 2: WITH ALL YOUR SOUL

Start

How would you define “soul”? When we say that something has soul (e.g. music, a person, a town) what do we mean?

Read

Matthew 22:34-40; 26:36-46.

Think & talk

1. How is soul different to heart? Why would Jesus’ command separate out heart, soul, mind, strength?
2. How did Jesus’ love God with his soul? How do we love God with our souls?
3. Read Daniel 6. How does the story of Daniel and the lion’s den reveal Daniel’s soul-love for God? How is it similar to Jesus in Gethsemane?

Godly habits: Prayer

This week's spiritual practice is prayer and solitude. So [read](#) or [listen](#) to [Chapter 1: Prayer from the Godly Habits](#) booklet. Then discuss the following questions:

- Which of the prayer habits would you like to give a go this term?
- What do you think will be the outcome of incorporating a prayer/solitude habit into your daily/weekly routine?

Pray

Dear Lord,

Thank you for making us unified beings, a fearful combination of body, mind and soul.

We praise you for the deep soul connection Jesus shared with you in his earthly life, and how he gave that up on the cross.

Help us to long for a similarly deep soul-connection with you, and to cultivate a rich prayer life.

Amen.

Godly habits: Scripture & Technology

This week there are 2 chapters of the [Godly Habits](#) book to read or listen to: *Chapter 2* on [Scripture](#) and *Chapter 7* on [Technology](#). Both encourage us to feed our minds with God-things, rather than mush.

Pray

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for being a God who is near to us, and who speaks to us.

Forgive us for our unwillingness to listen, and our lazy listening.

Help us to love you with our minds, by applying them to understanding your will for us in Scripture,

For we see that your words are life-giving!

Amen.

STUDY 4: WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH

Start

What is your favourite form of exercise?

Do you enjoy it while you're doing it, or only once you've finished?

Read

Romans 12:1-13; 1 Peter 4:7-11.

Think & talk

1. How does Romans 12 connect our worship of God to our service of others?

2. How does 1 Peter 4 express the urgency of loving God with our strength?

3. Are there aspects of service from either Romans 12 or 1 Peter 4 that you could incorporate into your worship routine or Christian life?

Godly habits: Sabbath

The topic in our [Godly Habits](#) booklet for this week is *Sabbath*. This might seem a bit odd: serving sounds like hard work, yet resting sounds like a break from hard work. But if the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:1 can refer to bodily service as worship, and if we are to love God with all our strength, then there's a connection between our worship and our service, our rest and our love for God.

So [read](#) or [listen](#) to *Chapter 3: Sabbath* and ask:

- How do I combine rest and service?
- How do I love God with all my strength in a way that builds my spirit rather than draining my soul?

Pray

Heavenly Father,

It is a privilege to serve you with all that we have, including our bodies.

Give us strength for the task, and give us the discipline to rest, that we might give our all for you.

Amen.

STUDY 5: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR#1

Start

Have you ever had great neighbours? What was so good about living near them?

Have you ever had bad neighbours? Why were they bad?

Read, think & talk

Today's topic is friendship, which is an often overlooked topic, but is a vitally important way in which we express love for one another.

1. Read the following verses and discuss their contribution to the question of friendship:

- Proverbs 12:26
- Proverbs 17:9
- Proverbs 17:17
- Proverbs 18:24
- Proverbs 22:11
- Proverbs 22:24, 25
- Proverbs 27:6, 9, 10
- Ecclesiastes 4:9-12
- Matthew 22:34-40

2. What are some distinctive aspects to "Christian friendship"? How might it be different to just "friendship with Christians"? What might being a Christian friend to an unbelieving friend look like?

Godly habits: Friendship

This week our time in the [Godly Habits](#) booklet also takes a turn from more personal and devotional elements to communal practices. So [read/listen](#) to *Chapter 4: Friendship*, then talk about how you are going to incorporate the disciplines of friendship into your routines.

Pray

Heavenly Father,
We thank you for friendship.
And we thank you for being a friend to us.
Please give us good friends.
And more importantly, help us to be good friends, to all sort of folks.
Amen.

STUDY 6: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR #2

Start

Have you ever worked in hospitality? What was it like?
What do you enjoy about sharing hospitality? What makes it difficult?

Read, think & talk

1. Read 3 John 1-8. How does this illustrate the principle of loving your neighbour? What is the connection between love for neighbour and showing hospitality?

2. Repeat the questions above after reading Hebrews 13:1-3.

Godly habits: Hospitality

You guessed it! The chapter from [Godly Habits](#) this week is *Chapter 5: Hospitality*. [Read](#) or [listen](#) to it together, then discuss together how you might give it a go in your life situation.

You might also like to read or listen to [Appendix 2: Simplicity](#), especially if your life feels more complex and involved than it needs to be.

Pray

Dear God

We love food and nice things.

Help us to love people, especially people who aren't already friends,

With our food and nice things,

So that they experience a little of the hospitable love you've shown us.

Amen.

STUDY 7: THE WHOLE-HEARTED LIFE

Start

Some say that the road to hell is paved with good intentions, which sounds a little extreme. But today, we need to pull all the disciplines we've discussed into a Rule of Life, which is a practical way to incorporate our best intentions with respect to godly habits into specific daily and weekly routines.

But first, **read Matthew 22:34-40** as a reminder of what undergirds our consideration of the spiritual disciplines. It's about loving God and loving others, the two great commands according to Jesus.

Godly Habits

[Read](#) or [listen](#) to the *Conclusion* of the [Godly Habits](#) booklet, *Putting Together a Rule of Life*.

There is a sample monthly planner on the next page you might like to use to sketch out a Rule of Life for yourself. Or use any blank space to write your Rule of Life.

If you want to, share it with your group, get feedback or suggestions, then refine.

Pray for God to bless your Rule, then give it a go!

Pray

Father,

We want to love you with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength.

We want to love our neighbours as ourselves.

But we want to turn our good intentions into concrete practices.

We ask for your blessing over the Rule of Life plans we've just drawn up.

And we need your help to persevere with them.

We ask for your grace for when we forget them or give up on them.

Help us to adjust them, and give them another go.

So that we might live like Jesus,

In whose name we pray.

Amen.

Monthly Planner

Month: _____

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Goals for the Month:

Reminders/Notes:

powered by
GeneralBlue

BONUS STUDY: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR

#3

Start

Anne Frank, who hid Jews from the Nazis until she was discovered and sent to a concentration camp where she died, said, “No one has ever become poor by giving.”

St Francis of Assisi said, “for it is in giving that we receive.”

Why do we find these quotes so inspirational, and yet so hard to put into practice?

Read, think & talk

1. In Old Testament times, the people of Israel recognised God as the owner of all things, and the trustworthy provider of all their needs by tithing, (i.e. giving one-tenth of their income to his service, see Deuteronomy 14:22-29). **As people who not only recognise God’s ownership of all things, and his provision of our material needs, but who benefit so much by the generous gift of his Son, what should be our response with regards to:**

- Our money
- Our time
- Our talents

2. In 1 and 2 Corinthians the Apostle Paul organises a collection for other Christians struggling in poverty. Look up the following verses to discover some of the “heart” principles that should govern how much we give away.

- 1 Cor 16:1-2:
- 2 Cor 8:1-4:
- 2 Cor 8:9:
- 2 Cor 8:10-12:
- 2 Cor 9:6-7:
- 2 Cor 9:12-13:

Godly habits: Generosity

The spiritual discipline of generosity is the topic for today. So [read](#) or [listen](#) to *Chapter 6: Generosity* from the [Godly Habits](#) book and commit to giving something a red hot go next term.

Pray

Heavenly Father,
You have given us every good thing.
Help us to share what you have given us with others who need it,
In response to what you have done for us in Christ,
And so that we might experience the blessing of being generous.
Amen.



GROWTH