

WE ARE A CHURCH ON LOCAL AND GLOBAL MISSION

God of
GOODNESS

MISSIONS SERIES

SMALL GROUP STUDIES

TERM TWO SCHEDULE

Sunday Apr 19th - Anglicare Sunday

God of Goodness #1 - Local Mission

What's on this week?

Apr 19th - The Commons

Apr 21st - Taste and See Course

Apr 24th - Crossfire starts back

April 25th - ANZAC Day

Sunday Apr 26th - IJM Freedom Sunday

God of Goodness #2 - IJM

What's on this week?

Apr 28th - Taste and See Course

Apr 29th - Jesus Club

May 2nd - Recharge Breakfast

Sunday May 3rd - Compassion Sunday

God of Goodness #3 - Compassion

What's on this week?

May 5th - Taste and See Course

May 5th - BCA Connect Event

May 5th - Seniors Friendship Lunch

May 6th - Team Night

WHAT ELSE IS COMING UP IN MAY?

May 11th - Men's Night

May 17th - Newcomers Lunch

May 17th - The Commons

May 20th - Prayer Night

May 23rd - Big Play Out

May 26th - Prime Time

May 30th - Legacy Partners Breakfast

May 30th - Help at Home

May 31st - Jesus Club Church

SERIES INTRODUCTION

God is good. His goodness is seen in the special way he has revealed himself to us in Jesus, sending him as our Saviour. He is also good in his general revelation – his rain falls on the righteous and the unrighteous. Yet many in our world, because of their circumstances, geography, or birthplace, do not experience much of the joy of his blessings and mercies.

God's people have a responsibility and a calling to bring God's blessings to all people – both in the ordinary good of everyday life, and in the life-giving message of the gospel.

Over these three weeks, we will be encouraging every member of St Paul's to consider their place in carrying that grace into a world that needs Jesus.

In our first week, we'll focus on **local mission with a focus on Anglicare**, considering the opportunities to share God's grace with the community around us.

In our second week, **International Justice Mission (IJM)** will join us across our Sunday services, confronting us with the desperate reality of modern slavery. Together, we will consider our responsibility and our calling to bring hope into these dark places of our world.

In our third week, in response to **Compassion Sunday**, we will be reminded of the countless children living in poverty who need to encounter the goodness of God.

This three-week series is not just about awareness, but about engagement. God has graciously given us all things not for ourselves, but for the sake of the world. Our prayer is that His word would continue to transform our hearts, so that we would show the goodness of God as we serve others and share the fruit of the gospel.

GOD OF GOODNESS - STUDY #1

LOCAL MISSION

OUR SUBURBS NEED TO KNOW THE GOODNESS OF GOD

JAMES 2:14-26 & MICAH 6:6-8

WELCOME

What stuck with you most from Sunday- either from our mission partners or from the passage we looked at?

If someone looked at your life, what evidence would they see that your faith in God is real?

EXPLORE

Brief Context:

James writes to a socially mixed Jewish Christian community scattered outside Israel, calling them to authentic faith. In today's passage, he confronts empty professions of faith, exposing the gap between what believers claim and how they live.

Read James 2:14-26

In this passage, James teaches that faith without deeds is dead. He shows this in five ways. As a group, discuss what each point means and how it shapes our understanding of the relationship between faith and deeds.

(see points on the next page)

1. v15-17

Point:

Understanding:

2. v18-19

Point:

Understanding:

3. v20-24

Point:

Understanding:

4. v25

Point:

Understanding:

5. v26

Point:

Understanding:

Read Micah 6:6–8

1. What are people in verses 6–7 assuming God wants from them?
2. According to Micah 6:8, what does God actually require and how does this connect with what James is saying?

REFLECT

3. How does James 2 help us understand the difference between belief and faith?
4. James 2:24 may feel uncomfortable to read. How does this verse fit with salvation by grace? What role do works play?

5. What do you think God requires of you? How do “acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God” fit into that?

APPLY

6. “Faith without deeds is dead” is a confronting statement. What might your actions reveal about the state of your faith? Where does your faith need to shape how you live?

Note: As we consider how our faith shapes our everyday actions and our call to show God’s goodness to those around us, let’s finish with two questions exploring practical ways our faith can result in deeds:

7. James 2:15–16 gives the example of wishing someone well but doing nothing to meet their needs. Where do we see this in our own lives?

8. Acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly can feel quite abstract. What are some every day, practical ways we can live this out?

PRAY

Take time to share and pray together in response to the passage, for each other's needs, for your group's link missionary, the events below, and the weekly ministries at St Paul's.

Specific things to pray for this week:

Anglicare: With our current cost of living crisis, pray that Anglicare's community pantry vans would reach locations and people in need

Sports Chaplaincy: Pray that our chaplains to have open doors to build genuine, trustworthy relationships, providing comfort and reflecting Jesus in all situations.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Apr 19th – The Commons

Apr 21st – Taste and See Course

Apr 24th – Crossfire starts back

April 25th – ANZAC Day

GOD OF GOODNESS - STUDY #2

IJM FREEDOM SUNDAY

MODERN SLAVES NEED TO KNOW THE GOODNESS OF GOD

MATTHEW 25:31-46

WELCOME

What stuck with you most from Sunday- either from IJM or from the passage we looked at?

EXPLORE

Brief Context:

This passage comes at the end of Jesus' teaching about his return and the final judgment. It forms part of his final block of teaching in Matthew's Gospel, spoken to his disciples shortly before his arrest and crucifixion

Read: Matthew 25:31-46

1. Separating sheep and goats was a normal task for a shepherd. In this passage, it is used to represent the Son of Man separating people at the final judgment.

For each group (the sheep and the goats), answer the following questions:

Who are they?

What actions are highlighted?

What judgment is given?

What is their response?

How does Jesus respond to them?

APPLY

6. How might this passage be a comfort to you in times of need?

7. The application of this passage is clear: practical love is not an optional extra for the Christian. How is your faith expressed in practical love for the vulnerable and those in need?

8. What are some ways, as individuals and as a group, you can practically live out your faith in this way?

PRAY

Take time to share and pray together in response to the passage, for each other's needs, for your group's link missionary, the events below, and the weekly ministries at St Paul's.

Specific things to pray for this week:

International Justice Mission (IJM): Pray for an ongoing case in S Asia, where 150 people are trapped in slavery at a brick kiln working in brutal conditions. Pray that IJM and its partners will hear and help every victim.

Chris & Erin (CMS – SE Asia): Pray for them as they prepare for many changes; a new baby in July, return to SE Asia in Sept, and prepare to move to a new, rural location.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Apr 28th – Taste and See Course

Apr 29th – Jesus Club

May 2nd – Recharge Breakfast

GOD OF GOODNESS - STUDY #3

COMPASSION SUNDAY

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY NEED TO KNOW THE GOODNESS OF GOD

1 JOHN 3:11-24 ; ISAIAH 61:1-9

WELCOME

What stuck with you most from Sunday- either from Compassion or from the passage we looked at?

EXPLORE

Brief Context:

This passage comes from John's first letter, written to believers to reassure them of the truth of the gospel and what it looks like to belong to God. It sits within a section where John contrasts those who are God's children with those who are not.

Read: 1 John 3:11-15

1. In this passage, John contrasts hate and love. What do we learn about each, and what does their presence reveal about us?

Read: 1 John 3:16-18

2. John has just taught that love for one another is a sign that we have passed from death to life. He now helps us understand what that love looks like. How does this passage define love?

Read: 1 John 3:19-24

3. What does it mean for our hearts to condemn us, and how does this affect our confidence before God?

4. What does John mean when he says "God is greater than our hearts," and how is that meant to reassure us?

5. How do belief in Jesus and love for others connect to having confidence before God?

REFLECT

6. Do you think it is fair to say that hating a brother or sister is like murder? Why or why not?

7. How does this passage's definition of love challenge and encourage you?

8. Setting your heart at rest in the presence of God, and having confidence before him, sounds deeply appealing. What do you think this means?

9. Is this a reality in your life? Why or why not?

APPLY

10. The presence of love that reflects Christ laying down his life is presented in this passage as a way of recognising whether the love of God is in you. Where in your life do you see this kind of love? Where could it be more present?

11. Over this three-week series, we have had very practical landing points - calling us to have a faith that produces good deeds, to engage in showing the love of God to those in need, and now to show Christlike, sacrificial love.

Take 5–10 minutes on your own to reflect on this short series and write down:

1–2 encouragements

1–2 convictions

1–2 practical changes you want to make or habits you want to build

PRAY

Take time to share and pray together in response to the passage, for each other's needs, for your group's link missionary, the events below, and the weekly ministries at St Paul's.

Specific things to pray for this week:

Compassion: Pray that the Lord would grant Compassion's leaders wisdom in stewarding minimal resources for maximal impact for the poor and vulnerable in amidst the global financial crisis.

Tim and Lauren (ECM – Glasglow): Please pray for them as they seek wisdom on what to do with their daughter, Zoe's schooling. Timing based on her age, and which school to send her to.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

May 5th - Taste and See Course

May 5th - BCA Connect Event

May 5th - Seniors Friendship Lunch

May 6th - Creative Team Night



**small
groups**
LIFE TOGETHER