

Introduction to Part B of the 'Discover God's Heart' Bible Studies

Welcome

These Part B Bible studies follow on from the 8 foundational studies that we have journeyed through as a group and a church. Like them, these studies have been used by churches all over the world as part of this movement of churches and communities working together to bring change spiritually, physically, emotionally and mentally.

This next set of studies continue to help us reflect on our own attitudes and behaviour in relation to God's priorities and also help us delve deeper into who needs to be part of the transformation process and delve deeper into some specific issues that affect our local communities, such as money and resources, holistic health and lifelong learning and education.

As before, each Bible study takes us through some questions to clarify the passage/ story; what that meant for them at the time; what that means for us now in relation to our community; and ends with putting the word into practice through an Act of Love, however small. Each also has a suggestion in 'Going deeper' for a way to engage people's hearts or other parts of us. Some studies include a video link which may help you frame the session or embed the learning.

Hoped for outcomes:

- Align our priorities to God's as we deepen our reach into our community
- Continue our 'Acts of Love', based on listening to God
- Galvanise more people to get involved and respond to God's calling
- Support our engagement with groups in our community on issues affecting them

A reminder about what we have learned about what works

Many of us are very used to facilitating and being part of Bible studies. We found it helpful to:

- Come with an open heart and open mind. Some are very familiar passages but as we pray for God's Holy Spirit to come and bring revelation, we discover new things.
- Keep looking outward to see how it applies to us in our community – each study builds on the previous one, so we see the impact over time and not always immediately.
- Make space for different perspectives. You might want to refresh your group a bit by bringing in new people and other generations. Read the passage in two translations, using versions like the Message or Passion to highlight different aspects.
- Listen to God and each other to identify how He wants us to put His word into action through 'Acts of Love' – it brings more fruit than just kindnesses.
- Jump straight into the Bible study when you meet, rather than chatting first. The study helps to bring deeper connections. Try to save your socialising to afterwards – or you might want to do the studies every fortnight and something else between.

A prayer for us going forward

Holy Spirit come and infuse every individual and group involved in this journey. Reveal your heart to us. Stir our hearts to bring transformation. As we throw our nets onto the other side of the boat in obedience to you, fill those nets and make your Kingdom come here.