



*We all long for a place called “home”.
 Because that’s how God made us.
 When we know God as our Father, Jesus as our Saviour,
 and other Christians as our family, we have truly come home.
 And in that home, every member of the family is loved, valued,
 and has a contribution to make – a life of purpose.*

SESSION 2: From guest to investor

In this session we explore whether we experience the Christian faith as as a guest who contributes financially for the benefit we receive, or whether we become an investor in God's kingdom.

ICEBREAKER: Do you support an organisation other than the church with a regular or occasional financial gift? Why?

DISCUSSION STARTER (*optional*): If you didn’t have time to share how group members responded to an encounter with Jesus, this is a good time to do that. If your group are reticent to speak personally, you may want to send a WhatsApp message in advance and / or ask a more confident person beforehand to share their story.

READ Luke 18.18-30 | Luke 21.1-4

Jesus spoke about money and material possessions more than many other themes. Read the two Bible passages and reflect on the two people’s different approaches to money. After some time of quiet reflection, invite the group to share their reflections. The following questions can help shape the conversation (as ever, select what seems most appropriate):

- Why do you think did the young man find it impossible to give up his wealth?
- Jesus didn’t ask everyone to give away all their wealth (some wealthy people supported his ministry financially). But is there a lesson for all of us in this account?
- The widow gives sacrificially. What is the connection between being generous and trusting God? How have I experienced this connection?

- “You cannot serve God and Mammon.” (Jesus in Matthew 6.24). “Mammon is an Aramaic word, and the apostles who preserved Jesus’ teachings generally translated them from Aramaic into the Greek their readers knew best. They could easily have done so with Mammon, using words for money or even wealth that have little negative connotation. Instead, they left this Aramaic word untranslated, suggesting that it had particular significance. Jesus describes Mammon as a rival to God, an alternative lord.” (Andy Crouch). How have I experienced the corrosive power of “Mammon”? What is the antidote?
- “Seek first the kingdom of God.” (Jesus in Matthew 6.33). The Bible encourages us to give some of “our” income to God as “first fruits” rather than leftovers. What’s the difference? How can giving of our “first fruits” help us grow in our faith?
- When King David invites the people of Israel to give generously to the work of building God’s temple, he prays, “Everything comes from you, Lord, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.” (1 Chron 29.14). David will never see the completion of the temple under his son Solomon. What ‘legacy’ do I want to leave behind?

FOR QUIET REFLECTION: Is there a response that Jesus invites me to make? Then slowly read this Bible verse: Jesus says, “Seek first God’s kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:33–34)

RESPOND IN OPEN PRAYER

SUGGESTED RESPONSES to offer to the group:

Following Jesus as Lord of all our lives is the beginning and end of discipleship. How can I take a next step?

(1) Begin to give from your first fruits and trust in God's provision. You may want to begin small and then increase your regular giving as you experience the faithfulness of God.

(2) For those of us who aren’t struggling financially at the moment: Can you prayerfully ask whom you could support by giving away the government fuel allowance this winter?

(3) Review your regular giving - can you take a faith step and increase it? What small lifestyle change might enable you to do that (e.g. two bottles of wine less per month > £10 per month increase)? For the Parish Giving Scheme, go to www.denhamparish.church/give

(4) Leave a legacy for Denham Parish Church in your will and do not restrict it to a specific purpose. This is a vote of trust in the future leadership to use it for God's glory.

For further resources and links go to:
www.denhamparish.church/hoteltohome