

# GBC LIFE GROUP RESOURCES 2024

## Series: Our Extra Ordinary Life Together

### Introduction to GBC Life Group Resources

Life Groups are a critical ministry of our extra ordinary life together at Gynea Baptist Church. These resources are produced each Monday as a companion to the sermon series. Choosing to use these resources facilitates our sense of community as we share together around common themes and passages.

Each week's resource includes a brief overview of the sermon series and of the sermon (which can be accessed on GBC's YouTube channel or via your favourite podcast platform), along with a series of activities to do together. Don't forget that The Big Ill podcast comes out mid-week as another companion to the sermon.

These range from questions to ask, prayers to pray, practices to try, and biblical passages to read (usually in the time between Life Group meetings). Feel free to pick and choose what will work well for your group – you don't have to do everything!

In 2024 we have also begun to include some additional information that we are encouraging our Life Group leaders, as leaders of GBC, to be sharing with your group. These include reflecting on a particular mission commitment of GBC, promoting and praying for GBC initiatives, and celebrating what God is doing in and through our community of faith.

If you have feedback on these resources, please email Nicole Jones: [office@gymeabaptist.org.au](mailto:office@gymeabaptist.org.au).



### While We Wait–Studies in Chronicles

While We Wait is our Old Testament series for 2024 and we will be dipping in and out of Chronicles over the course of the year. This is the third block and will run through to early November.

Chronicles was written to provide God's people with a model for how to live while they were waiting, with increasing desperation, for the promises of God to be fulfilled. Part of our extra ordinary life together is to encourage one another while we wait for the promises of God to restore and renew all things in Christ Jesus to be fulfilled. I believe that there are important and timely lessons for us to learn in Chronicles and look forward to diving more deeply into this text over the course of the year.

### A Brief Overview of This Week's Sermon

Key Text(s): 2 Chronicles 33:1-20

This week's sermon was a first-person narrative in which Marc explored the question of faithfulness from the perspective of Manasseh. The premise was that the majority of Manasseh's reign, which was marked by compromise, was influenced by the outcome of his father, Hezekiah's rebellion. Seeking to ensure Judah's future, he followed the example of his politically successful grandfather, Ahaz, rather than his faithful father. It wasn't until Manasseh was imprisoned that he reconsidered his father's example and realised that faithfulness is its own reward. You may want to watch the first-person narrative as a group before discussing it. You can find it at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guAQqfJm7Jw>.

The sermon starts at 52:06 and runs for about 25 minutes.

## Questions to Ask

1. What stood out to you in Manasseh's story?
2. "Faithfulness is its own reward." Discuss.
3. In the narrative, Manasseh was influenced by his father and grandfather, in particular. Who has influenced your understanding of faithfulness? What was their example?

## A Prayer to Pray

1. Give thanks for those who have influenced you to greater faithfulness. Pray for those in your life for whom you can provide a model to follow.

## A Practice to Try

1. Make a list of those who have influenced you the most in your spiritual journey and give thanks each day for them.

## Readings to Read This Week

These readings go a bit deeper into some of the themes of this week's sermon.

1. 2 Kings 21:1-18
2. Proverbs 3:31-35
3. Deuteronomy 6:4-9
4. Psalm 103
5. 2 Timothy 1:3-7

## A Mission Commitment to Reflect on

We hope that our Life Groups help people feel connected to one another and committed to our mission together as a community of faith. To that end we encourage Life Group leaders to remind your group about our mission commitments. Each week we'll draw attention to one or more of those commitments that fits neatly with the topic or theme. (See "GBC Mission Commitments" document for an overview of our commitments).

As a community of faith that wants to respond to the invitation of God, learning to seek him is a central practice. As we seek him, we will be found by him.

## A GBC Initiative to Promote/Celebrate

Each week we will provide you with a key aspect of our community news that we would encourage you to remind your Life Group about.

1. On November 24 we will be celebrating seventy-five years as a community of faith! Our theme is "Great is Thy Faithfulness" and we will be giving thanks for those who have come before us – on whose shoulders we stand – and considering how we might be faithful for the generation to come. One of the things we will be doing is taking a special thank offering that will be used to seed an endowment fund. The hope is that, by the time GBC turns a hundred, this fund will be in a position to facilitate ministry. Please prioritise being there on the 24<sup>th</sup> and prayerfully consider God's invitation to be contribute to the thank offering.

## Additional Resources

### The mission commitments of GBC

We have made several references to the mission commitments of GBC. This is the title we have given to our vision, purpose, and values. These will no doubt be familiar to you, but we thought it might be helpful to provide a clear overview of them.

Our mission commitments begin with John 20:21, "As the Father sent me, I am sending you." These words contain a central belief about what we are called to as a community of faith: that we are to continue to ministry and mission of Jesus to restore and renew everything according to the will of the Father and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

As we reflected on this commission, we formulated a mission statement to attempt to summarise what we wanted to do. While we don't refer to it very often, it is helpful to see the progression of our thought. The mission we formulated was: Everywhere we go and in everything we do, we will invite everyone to follow Jesus.

Taking the pattern we find in the Gospels we affirm that anyone can begin to follow Jesus; regardless of what they believe about him, what they know about him, and without changing their lives. When Jesus called his first disciples, he demanded none of these things; only inviting them to follow him. Over time they learned about him which challenged their beliefs about him and raised the implications for their lives, but initially, they only needed to be willing to follow.

The individual transformation that comes as people place their trust in Jesus and the commission that he has sent us to participate in led to a simple vision statement; what we want to see. We want to see lives changed by Jesus.

All of this took shape in our purpose as a community of faith – our "why". To be a community of faith who courageously take up the invitation of God the Father to participate in His grand plan to restore and renew all things in Christ Jesus through the enabling presence of the Holy Spirit.

It was only as we gained clarity on our purpose that we identified a set of values that we believed were aligned with these mission commitments. The five values we identified are:

- To be On-Purpose. Intentional to create margins in our lives to participate in God's mission.
- To be Big-Hearted. Generosity in all our resources as a reflection of God's own generosity to us is a central value.
- To be Whole-Life Learners. As followers of Jesus we are called to ongoing transformation of our lives; learning to be more like Jesus. This also invites humility as we recognise our ongoing need of change.
- To be Others-Focused. To demonstrate love and care to others, over and above ourselves is a key characteristic of followers of Jesus.
- To be Trust-Worthy. We don't want to get in the way as people begin to follow Jesus. We want to reflect this value in our commitment to being a Safe Church.

These are the mission commitments that we hope will serve to give us some common language that reminds us of our unity together as followers of Jesus and the community of faith here at GBC.