

WEALTH & POSSESSIONS



Wk 4

Sunday 21 May 2023

TODAY'S 9:45AM SERVICE

- Welcome
- Songs
- Confession & Assurance
- Spotlight
- Bible Reading:
Deut 15:1-11 (p. 191)
& Luke 19:1-10
(p. 1052)
- Sermon
- Prayers
- Song
- Conclusion

Most St Stephen's collection is received electronically.
BSB: 062 272
Account Number:
00490436

If you are a visitor please don't feel obliged to contribute financially.

Our 9:45am service is live streamed to our YouTube and Facebook Channels. If you don't wish to feature on our stream, please occupy the pews towards the back.

Welcome to St Stephen's. We're so glad you are here. We think there is no better place to be on a Sunday than church. We hope you find a warm welcome.

We would love to hear from you – take a moment and fill in the Connect Card using either the QR Code or the paper version enclosed. The paper one can be placed in the box near the exit.



Today we continue our series looking at wealth and possessions. We've been tracing the idea through the Bible in an attempt to understand God's teaching on it. Generosity is the overwhelming attitude of God's people. We are to look for ways to bless others – even when it costs us. That was the attitude of Jesus to us.

We hope you are prompted to think more deeply about the God of the Bible and apply that to your own life.

Next Steps

Are you new? We would love to meet you. Hear a brief intro on the life of our church at our next Newish Morning Tea on Sunday 28 May. It runs for ½ an hour straight after the service.

Been regularly coming? Being part of a GaP Group is a great way to discuss today's message with others and pray for God's wisdom in your life. Fill in a Connect Card for more information.

Prayers for the Service

These prayers are used during the service. Prayer is a privilege we are given because Christ died for us. His death & resurrection means we can confidently approach God seeking forgiveness (Hebrews 10:22). If you believe that Christ died to deal with your failings then you should be confident to pray with us. If you are still exploring who Christ is then feel free to listen in.

A Prayer of Confession

Heavenly Father,
we praise you for adopting us as your children
and making us heirs of eternal life.
In your mercy you have washed us from our sins
and made us clean in your sight.
Yet we still fail to love you as we should
and serve you as we ought.
Forgive us our sins and renew us by your grace,
that we may continue to grow as members of Christ,
in whom alone is our salvation. Amen.

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.

1 Peter 3:18

The Lord's Prayer

This is the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples to pray (Matthew 6:5-14).

Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name
Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever
Amen

Sermon Notes

Giving to the Poor | Deuteronomy 15:1-11 & Luke 19:1-10

Preacher: Prashanth Colombage

1. God's people give to the poor

Legal Foundations

New Testament formulation

Applying it to us



Instika Campaign

2. Giving heals and hurts

Blessing

Cost

3. True generosity comes from true grace

Who are you?

Who is Jesus?

Gospel and Prayer (GaP) Group Study

1. Share an account of someone who has modelled generosity to you. Why are they generous?

Read Luke 19:1-10

Getting your head around the passage:

Use as many questions as you need to ensure you understand the passage's contents.

- A. What do we know about Zacchaeus?
- B. What is it that Zacchaeus wants?
- C. What do the crowd think of him?
- D. How does Jesus meet him?
- E. What do the crowd think of Jesus?
- F. How does Zacchaeus respond to Jesus?

2. In Deut 10:18 Moses says “[God] defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing.”

Why is care for the poor a necessary response of God's people?

3. What opportunities do you have to increase your generosity to the poor?

4. What is stopping you from being more generous to those less fortunate?

5. Consider Zacchaeus, how does God offer to treat the greedy? What good news does this present us?

6. How can the answer to question 5 transform our attitudes to the poor and our wealth & possessions?

Prayer

- A. Spend time confessing the areas where you find generosity difficult.
- B. Ask God to transform your attitudes to wealth & possessions in light of the gospel.



GaP Group Reflection

Watch the video provided to your GaP Group leader and consider the following questions:

- i. What's your favourite song or hymn sung in church?
- ii. How can we encourage and develop our music ministry and our music team? If you are musical what is holding you back from this ministry? Can you share that with Gordon?

Read the Bible with us!

- 1. What encouragements and warnings do these passages contain?
- 2. Who are we to care for?
- 3. What motivations are provided?
- 4. Pray God will be making you more generous.

Monday - [Luke 19:1-10](#)

Tuesday - [Deut 15:1-11](#)

Wednesday - [Deut 10:14-22](#)

Thursday - [Matt 25:31-46](#)

Friday - [Luke 6:32-36](#)

Notices

Reflections from Reach Australia

The staff along with parish members (Nina Shou & Liz Cooper) visited the Reach Australia Conference last week.

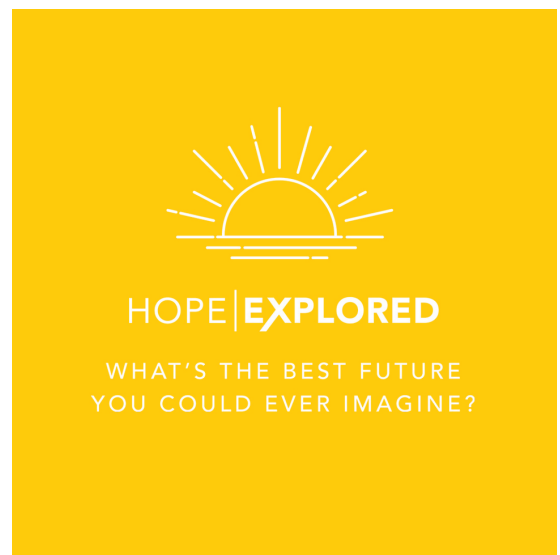
The conference has run for 6 years and aims to engage ministry leaders in an intentional and coherent way of running our church life and ministry. This year the primary focus was how to build bible shaped community.



The team was greatly encouraged with the content and came away with a number of key areas to focus on. Over the coming months we will introduce you to some proposed changes to Pastoral Care, music ministry and welcoming which we have grappled with. Our great desire is God will create a beautiful community shaped by the Gospel which reminds people of our lasting hope in Christ.

Hope Explored Course

The Hope Explored course starts this Wednesday night, 24 May, 7-9 pm at Willoughby Hotel upstairs (Penshurst Room). This is for anyone who wants to explore the hope the Christian faith offers—no prior experience is required. The course is free and there is the option to purchase any drinks or food from the bar/bistro. The night will involve eating and connecting with others, watching some short videos, exploring what the Bible says, and discussing and asking questions.



Hope Explored is a 3 week course: 24 May, 31 May and 7 June from 7-9pm at Willoughby Hotel. Book your spot at st-stephens.com.au/autumn

Music Training

This Sunday after the 9:45am service the music team will have a training session together. This session is also open to anyone wanting to try and see what it's like to serve in music at church. We are thankful to all our musicians who work hard to lead us in song. We really value our music here at St Stephen's. Music is a great gift from God that helps us express in body and soul our adoration, praise, thankfulness and dependence on God with each other. It helps the Word of God dwell richly in our hearts and opens up the beauty of the gospel to those exploring the Christian faith.

Newish Morning Tea

If you consider yourself new to St Stephen's then we want to welcome you. We run Newish Morning Teas every month to help people get their bearings, meet staff and other new people and take a step further into church life. Our next Newish is on Sunday 28 May after the 9:45am service.

Playtime Term 2 Update

Tuesday morning we have about 20-25 kids come along with their carers to playtime. We want everyone who comes to playtime to feel loved and welcomed. But more than that we want this to be a place where families can explore Jesus. As our volunteers connect with the adults we hope to hear their story, share Jesus and give them opportunities to find out more. Please be praying that God might use this ministry to save families. Pray that the playtime team can gently and boldly make the most of every opportunity to share Jesus.

Weekly Prayer Meetings

What is our church powered by? The prayers of God's people. Our first mission characteristic is to be people who pray big prayers shaped by the gospel. We need to pray if we want to see God work in and through us. We need to pray if we really believe the good news of Jesus which says only God can save.

Will you join us at one of our two weekly prayer meetings? We are trialling a new prayer meeting time of 1-1:30pm on Mondays. You can join us in person in the Chapel Hall or online (see back cover for details). Come join us in this ministry.



**i. Praying big
prayers shaped by
the gospel**

**Mondays and Saturdays every
week**

What's Coming Up

22 May	Prayer Meeting: Mondays 1pm on Zoom
24 May	Hope Explored Course
26 May	Friday Kids & HPS Youth
27 May	Prayer Meeting: Saturdays 8:30am in Chapel Hall
28 May	Newish Morning Tea
31 May	Hope Explored Course
2 June	Square 1 Camp

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