

5 WEEKS OF SMALL GROUP STUDIES

Sermon based Small Group studies are designed to be explored with your Small Group after hearing the Sunday sermon. A time of prayer should accompany the session.

To access the sermon again, please head to the church website or YouTube channel www.devonportcoc.com.au

Name

Welcome to the *You in Five Years* small group study. Over the next five weeks, we're going to press pause on the chaos of now and look forward — not with wishful thinking, but with intentional faith. This study is not about making New Year's resolutions or chasing quick fixes. It's about trusting that real, lasting change happens when we take small, consistent steps over time — with God at the centre.

Why Five Years?

Most of us *overestimate* what we can do in five weeks and *underestimate* what God can do in five years. Five years is long enough to build something meaningful, but short enough to see real results. It's a window of time where you can:

- Build a new spiritual habit
- Strengthen a relationship
- Start a degree
- Finish a degree
- Pay off debt
- Learn to forgive
- Grow in your relationship with God

Imagine your faith, your character, your family, and your future five years from now — shaped by the daily choices you make starting today.

Spiritual Growth Isn't Instant

We live in a microwave culture, but God works more like a slow-cooker. Scripture teaches that we “reap what we sow” (Galatians 6:7–9), and sowing takes patience. If you plant the right seeds now — with your habits, your mindset, and your relationships — you'll see transformation that lasts. This study invites you to:

- Get honest about where you are
- Dream about where God might want to take you
- Make small, faithful decisions each day
- Rely on God's grace when it gets hard
- Walk with others who are committed to growth

Who will you be in 5 years?

WHO DO YOU WANT TO BECOME?

Week 1 Sermon: The life you get stuck with

Icebreaker Questions

1. Who was your childhood hero - and how have your ideals changed since then?
2. Think about your age in 5 years' time. If you could accomplish one personal goal between now and then, what would it be?

In the Scriptures

Read Galatians 6:7-9

1. What does it mean to “reap what you sow”?
2. What “seeds” are you sowing today (habits, choices) that will grow you spiritually? Are there any “seeds” that you need to stop sowing?

Read Proverbs 4:25-27

3. We get where we want to be – and where we *don't* want to be – the same way: one step at a time.

What distractions make it difficult to stay focussed on God's path?

Which person or habit helps you fix your eyes on Jesus, be consistent in your spiritual life and stay on track?

Life Application Questions

1. Picture yourself 5 years from now. What kind of person do you want to be? (Faithful, disciplined, joyful, someone who hears from God...)
2. Looking at the dot points below, what is one area of your life that needs intentional investment, starting now?

Take some time to prayerfully reflect on who God might be calling you to become in the next 5 years.

- Spiritually: How do you want your relationship with God to have grown in 5 years? What steps will help you get there?
- Relationally: What kind of friend, spouse, or parent do you want to be? How can you strengthen your most important relationships?
- Emotionally: What attitudes or habits do you want to grow in, or leave behind?
- Vocationally: How can you glorify God in your study, work and calling?
- Financially: How can you practise stewardship, generosity and financial wisdom?
- Physically: What steps could you take to care for your physical health as a way of honouring God?

Put it in writing (next page)

Choose 2-3 areas listed above, where God is challenging you to move forward. Describe the kind of person you want to be in 5 years' time (more generous, fit enough to walk for 30 minutes a day, someone who prays for others every day...).

Commit to one habit to get you there.

Name someone who will help hold you accountable for long-term growth.

In 5 years, I want to be someone who...

3. Who we are becoming, is shaped by the small decisions we make every day. What's one habit you will start, to align your future with your faith?



4. Who will help hold you accountable for long-term growth?



Prayer Focus

Pray for each other, for the goals or habits you have identified, and for help to align our steps with God's plans for our lives.

WHO DO YOU WANT TO BECOME?

Week 2 Sermon: In the absence of a crisis

Icebreaker Questions

1. Do you have more trouble *starting* things you don't really enjoy or *finishing* them?
2. What's one small thing you've done consistently, that made a big difference over time?

In the Scriptures

Read Matthew 25:14-30

1. What does the parable of the talents teach us about faithfulness in the small things?
2. Why was the master so harsh with the servant who *didn't* invest what they were given? How does this parable relate to us?
3. What gift or talent has God entrusted to you that you might be hiding, or doing nothing with?
4. How do fear, comparison and unhealthy habits keep us from making small steps forward?

Life Application Questions

1. What is one small act of obedience you can begin this week? (Think about your new habit from last week. How did you go? Did you start? If not, what held you back?)
2. How can consistency trump intensity in your spiritual life?

"In physics, inertia is the tendency of an object to stay in motion or to stay at rest unless acted on by an outside force. Spiritually speaking, the same is true for our lives.

If we are stuck in bad habits or unhealthy patterns, inertia works against us, keeping us where we are – comfortable but stagnant. On the other hand, once we begin taking small steps in the right direction, inertia becomes our greatest ally, helping us keep going. The key is getting started."

Levi Lusko

3. "Comfortable but stagnant" – What is one area of your spiritual life where you have prioritised comfort over calling?
 - The way I enter into worship
 - My Bible reading commitment
 - Talking to new people at church so they feel welcomed
 - Being mentored
 - My attitude toward serving God
 - Using my God-given gifts and talents
 - My prayer life
 - Church attendance
 - Something else...

Write it down: What will you do differently this week as a catalyst for change?

4. Read about Moses and the Israelites in Acts 7:36-39.

When the Israelites left slavery in Egypt, they wandered in the wilderness for forty years. Most of them didn't enter into the Promised Land because they were held back by fear, doubting God's provision, longing for the past and being stuck in a slavery mindset. Fear, busyness and other excuses can be comfortable companions when we don't want to change... but we are the ones who miss out on the blessing of spiritual growth!

What causes inertia in your spiritual life and holds you back from stepping into God's calling? What are the main barriers?

Fear and doubt	I love my comfort zone	I don't know where to start
I don't like change	Negative mindset	My past
Bad habits or unhealthy patterns	I find it hard to believe that God has good things for me	
My main barriers to spiritual growth		

Prayer Focus

Share what holds you back from spiritual growth (above). Ask God to help you break your pattern of spiritual inertia, so you can step into the future he has planned for you.

How are we going to change?

Week 3 Sermon: Too small to fail

Icebreaker Questions

1. Would you rather take lots of small steps or one giant leap toward a goal?
2. What's one area of your life where you show great persistence, and what motivates you?

In the Scriptures

Read Philippians 3:13-14.

1. Paul talks about “forgetting what is behind”. What kind of things should we forget or leave behind when we are aiming for spiritual maturity?
2. How does being aware of your “heavenward prize” help at times when life and spiritual practises feel like a daily grind?
What is one area of your life where you just need to “press on” for now?

Read Exodus 23:29-31, just before the Israelites enter the Promised Land.

3. After God showed his power by parting the Red Sea, among other amazing miracles, he now tells the Israelites that inheriting the Promised Land and will be a “little by little” process. What do you think is God's purpose in this process?
4. Describe the relationship between what God says *he* will do and what he tells the Israelites *they* will do (v 31). How does that relate to your Christian walk?

Lasting change isn't about instant results. It's about faithful persistence. Instead of setting goals that are overwhelming and too big to achieve, make them too small to fail.

Life Application Questions

1. Looking back over the past 5 years, how have you seen God at work in your life? Can you identify a time when you would have loved God to intervene with a Red Sea miracle, but he invited you into "little by little"?
2. Check back to week 1, page 7, where you wrote down the kind of person you want to become. What is one priority (spiritual or otherwise) that you want to stay committed to over the next 5 years?

My priority

My next small step

What is one ridiculously small step you can make to get started toward your goal? (Take a 5 minute walk every day; memorise one Bible verse; send an encouraging text to a friend once a week.)

3. Small steps disrupt old patterns and create new habits. The Israelites had to create a new pattern of trusting God as he led them into the process of inheriting the Promised Land.
How is God inviting you to trust him by committing to small steps of change?

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.
Galatians 5:22-23

4. The fruit of the Spirit is evidence of God at work in our lives. As you think about your 5-year priority and the step by step process of spiritual growth, which of these “fruit” do you need more of and why?

Prayer Focus

Pray with each other about the goals, priorities, or small steps that will move you forward. Invite Holy Spirit to be at work in you, helping you, guiding you and producing that fruit.

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

Ephesians 3: 20-21

When are we going to change?

Week 4 Sermon: From evening to morning

Icebreaker Questions

1. When is your most productive time of the day – when do you have energy to get things done?
2. Share one of your daily routines that either sets you up for the day in the morning or gets you ready for rest in the evening.

“One of the most common barriers to growth is that we think we don’t have time to add anything else into our busy lives. The biblical concept of time is based on this pattern: from sunset to sunset. That means the best time to make meaningful change isn’t in the chaos of the day, (where the tasks and commitments are often beyond our control) but in the quiet moments from evening to morning.” Levi Lusko

In the Scriptures

Read Psalm 92:1-2, Daniel 6:10, Matthew 11:28-29.

1. What are the rhythms or spiritual practises mentioned in these verses? What spiritual practises (prayer, Bible reading, worship...) do you incorporate into your day as a habit or routine?
2. How does the Psalmist anchor their day in the morning and evening? How does this differ from your usual morning and evening routine?

3. What habits or distractions do you need to eliminate to ensure your day starts and ends with God? How do you think this might impact the chaos or busyness of your day or night?
4. Whether our spiritual routines are well established, irregular or non-existent, we can always press closer into God. Write down one spiritual practise you want to start, get consistency with or go deeper.

My spiritual practise:

Time of day:

Because it's going to help me...

Remember - spiritual growth happens step by step, little by little. Investments accumulate over time, but where there is no investment there is no accumulated growth.

Life Application Questions

1. Most people sleep to recover from their day. Have you ever thought of rest as what fuels your day? Could that change your priority for sleep?
2. Which of type of rest - physical, emotional or mental - is the hardest for you at the moment and why? What circumstances, habits or distractions rob you of the rest you need?
3. Read Genesis 2:1-3.
God didn't rest because he was tired. How do these verses give us a different picture of rest?

- Plan out your typical but ideal day, anchored in the evening and morning by time with God, including time to wind down and rest. Focus on the evening and morning routines – add in that spiritual practise from the previous page.

What needs to change for this to become your **every** day?

morning	Time	Activity
day		
evening		

Prayer Focus

Share any small steps you have started implementing for spiritual growth. Continue to pray for each other, particularly for anyone who needs rest and spiritual refreshment.

What if?

Week 5 Sermon: What can't be taken away

Icebreaker Questions

1. Are you someone who likes to have a plan and structure or do you prefer to go with the flow? Where would you put yourself on the continuum below?

I live and breathe by my schedule!

No plans! It's all spur of the moment over here!

-
2. Share about a time when you deliberately paused from busyness to prioritise Jesus.

In the Scriptures

Read Luke 10: 38-42.

1. Describe how Martha was feeling in this situation. Who do you relate more to, Mary or Martha? Why?
2. Have you ever demanded a response from Jesus like Martha did (v 40)?

In your prayers do you usually tell God what *you* think he should be doing, or do you pray assuming he knows best?

Martha's expectation that Mary would help her in the kitchen was completely reasonable in that cultural environment. Mary's choice to sit and learn at Jesus' feet, like one of the other (male) disciples, was totally against the norm. Jesus praised her choice.

3. What are the things that worry you and distract you from spending quality time with Jesus?
What kind of expectations or pressure do you need to ignore so you can prioritise being with Jesus?
4. Mary chose to sit at Jesus' feet. She didn't drift into it. She didn't stumble upon it. She made an intentional choice to prioritise Jesus and put him first. She made her choice, and then she followed through.
What is one practical way you will choose to sit at Jesus' feet this week?

I will

Life Application Questions

1. What role does 'surrender' play in making choices that will enable you to grow spiritually?
2. Martha was overwhelmed and frustrated when her expectations weren't met. Have you ever experienced a life event that completely disrupted the way your day/ year/ life was headed?
How did being anchored in Christ help you navigate the unknown?

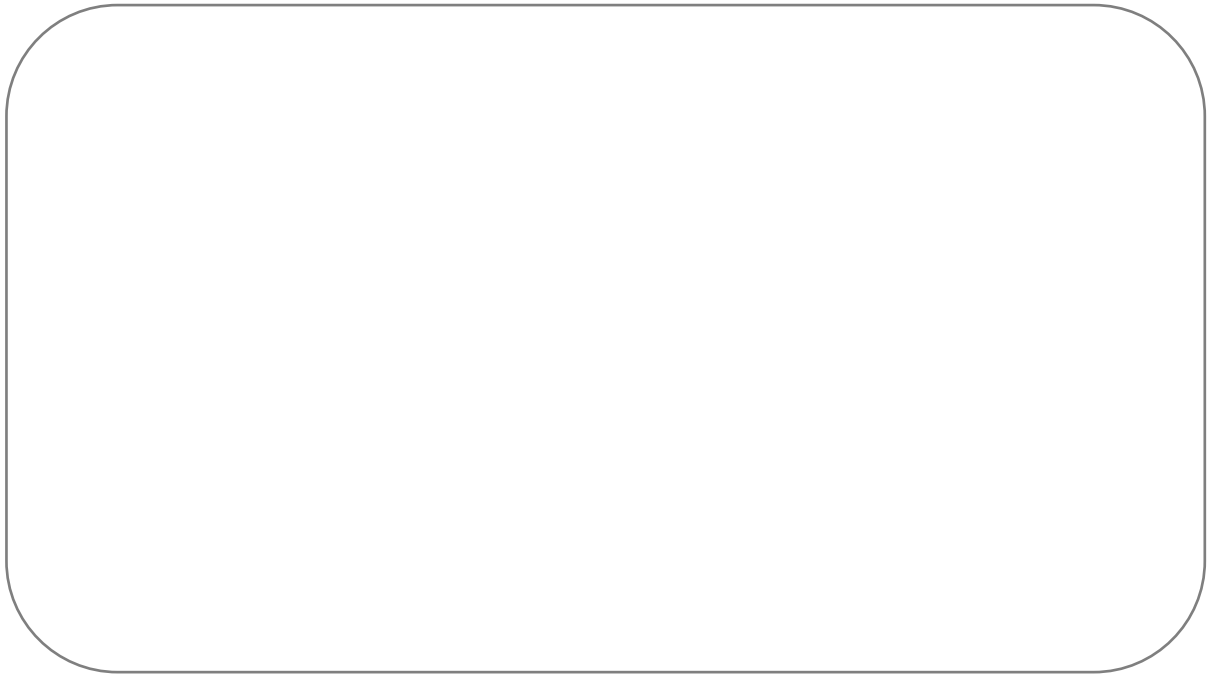
It's important to think about the future and where we want to be in 5 years, but what if things don't go to plan? Plans and dreams, finances, relationships, mental or physical health... all these things can crumble.

That's why it's so important to cultivate a relationship with Jesus that is deep and strong – because no matter what else happens in life, **nothing** can take our relationship with Jesus away.

Prioritising Jesus now is the training that prepares you for the trial you're not in yet.

3. Write a prayer confessing to Jesus the unnecessary things that often overwhelm or distract you.

Thank him that that he is always faithful in his love, and that his presence is always available to us.

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing a prayer.

4. Read Revelation 3:20. What is the picture of spending time with Jesus in these verses? Is this how you usually think of your relationship with Jesus?

As you step into the journey of spiritual growth, hold firmly to this truth: Your relationship with Jesus is the foundation for everything else.

Prayer Focus

Spend time praising God for what he has started in you and what he will complete in you. Thank him for his love and his presence.

The next 5 years are full of potential!

You have identified some small steps that will lead toward the big picture of who God is calling you to be. But more than achieving goals or checking boxes, the greatest transformation happens when we become more like Christ.

Life is unpredictable. Our plans may not always unfold as we hope, but one thing remains constant: the love of God. Seek Jesus as your first priority and worship him in every season.

Keep going. Keep growing. Step by step, little by little. And 5 years from now, you might look back and see how God has been at work in you.

**“...he who began a good work in you
will carry it on to completion until the
day of Christ Jesus.”**

Philippians 1:6

