



SOUTHERN CROSS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
growing followers of Jesus



TERM 3, 2022

IN CHRIST IN LISMORE

A series in Ephesians



1	JUL 24	IN CHRIST. IN LISMORE	EPHESIANS 1:1-14
2	JUL 31	POWER IN CHRIST	EPHESIANS 1:15-23
3	AUG 7	UNITED IN CHRIST	EPHESIANS 2
4	AUG 14	MESSENGERS OF CHRIST	EPHESIANS 3
5	AUG 21	MATURE IN CHRIST	EPHESIANS 4:1-16
6	AUG 28	OUR WALK IN CHRIST	EPHESIANS 4:17-5:20
7	SEPT 4	RELATIONSHIPS IN CHRIST	EPHESIANS 5:21-6:9
8	SEPT 11	CELEBRATION SUNDAY: HERE IS LOVE	1 JOHN 4:7-12
9	SEPT 18	STANDING FIRM IN CHRIST	EPHESIANS 6:10-24

IN CHRIST. IN LISMORE.

In Ephesians, Paul writes to people who are present in two locations at the same time. In verse two we read, he writes to those "in Ephesus" and "in Christ". The letter is all about assuring the Ephesian Christians of their status 'in Christ' and showing how that ought to play itself as they live their lives in Ephesus.

For us, over this term, we'll be exploring deeply what it means for us to be in Christ and considering how that does and could shape our experience of life in Lismore and the surrounding region.

I'm really looking forward to our time together in Ephesians as we delve more into our precious status 'in Christ'. It's such a rich letter. On every second line it feels like there's another Christmas present to open, enjoy and put to use. I hope and pray that as a community we are comforted and delighted by Christ through it.

James
July 2022

How to be growing followers of Jesus as you study God's Word...

In community

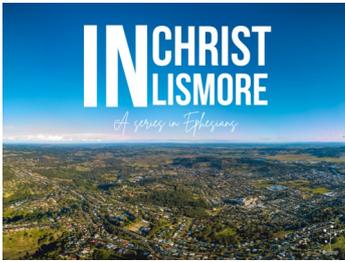
It's good to study the Bible by yourself but it's even better to do it with friends. Bible study is best when it happens in the context of community. Bible study shouldn't be just an unrelated add-on to the rest of your busy life, it should be an essential part of an integrated whole—Christian friends doing what Christian friends do. There are two key ways we should be making use of God's word in community: "word to life" and "life to word".

Word to life

When we study the Bible together we're letting God set the agenda. That's very important! We listen to God speak in the Bible, we work hard to help each other understand exactly what he's saying, and then together we apply what God is saying to our lives in the confidence that our loving Creator and Redeemer knows what's best for us. The important thing to remember is that we actually need each other throughout this whole process. It's great to study the Bible together!

Life to word

The second crucial way that we should be making use of the Bible in community is in day-to-day conversation, starting with the everyday happenings of our lives and applying the gospel to those situations. The great thing is that the better we get at moving from "word to life", the better we'll get at moving from "life to word" and the more our communities will be shaped by the gospel of Jesus! So enjoy—make the most of it—and let's watch as God shapes us to be more and more like his glorious Son!



Sample “Swedish Method” Study

Preparation Questions

Use these questions to help you work through the passage and discover what God is saying and how it applies to your life. Do this on your own so that you’re ready to share your thoughts when you gather with others.

Read the chapter



BIG IDEA

1. How would you summarise the central message of this passage?

Pay close attention to the logical flow of the passage. If it contains direct teaching (e.g. the NT letters), the most helpful tool in your kitbag is to follow the linking words (e.g. “therefore”, “so”, “but”). If your passage is more descriptive, the logic (and therefore the point) will be less explicit so you’ll need to focus on the flow of the story to work it out. You’ll also want to keep an eye out for significant themes which may be highlighted by repetition or by the use of metaphors or significant words or word families.



WINDOW

2. What did you discover (or recover) in this passage about what God is like and what he’s done?

The Bible is God’s “special revelation”. In it he reveals himself to us so that we can know him. So the Bible is like a WINDOW through which we can see the most glorious view ever beheld—a view of God himself. When we read the Bible we should be keeping the authors purpose in mind—to know him—rather than coming with our own agendas.



MIRROR

3. What did you discover in this passage about yourself or your circumstances?

The Bible also acts like a MIRROR. As we read God’s word and discover what he is like, we should also be looking to discover ourselves. A mirror allows us to see features and parts of ourselves that we wouldn’t otherwise (and perhaps would rather not!) see. The Holy Spirit uses God’s word to shape the way we think about ourselves and our circumstances. The Bible corrects our distorted views with the main purpose of helping us to relate rightly to God and our neighbour.



GOSPEL

4. How does this passage relate to or contribute to your understanding of the gospel and what it means to live according to the gospel?

The Bible, like all good stories, has a shape to it. It has a focus. It has a hero. God’s self-revelation is fulfilled in Jesus. So no matter what part of the Bible we’re reading we’ll only fully understand it when we grasp how it points us to Jesus and enlarges and deepens our understanding of the gospel. Some tools to help in discovering this dimension of a passage are the SALVATION HISTORY tool (asking “what role does this passage play in the grand story of the bible?”); the TYPOLOGY tool (asking “how is this person (or group or situation) a type (or anti-type) of Jesus?”); and the THEMES tool (asking “what gospel themes are central to this passage?”). This can also be a good time to think about personal application—i.e. If this is true about Jesus and his gospel, then what difference should it make to my life?



QUESTIONS

5. What questions has this passage raised for you that remain unanswered?

One of the key skills in Bible discovery is to be inquisitive. Asking questions will help you get the most out of any passage. Whenever you feel any mental discord reading a passage it's a sign that there's still more to discover, so dig in! Any questions that remain unanswered are worthy of group discussion. Such questions might be logical ("I just don't get how the whole passage fits together"); theological ("this doesn't seem to match with my understanding of what the Bible teaches elsewhere"); semantic (I'm not sure I really know how those words are being used); etc...

6. How should you respond to this passage in your thoughts, attitudes & behavior?

RESPONSE

This is perhaps the most important and most neglected aspect of Bible discovery. God has given us his word for a purpose—so that we can know him and be inwardly and then outwardly transformed by our relationship with him. The challenge is that we are insecure and resistant to the hard work of transformation. Because of our insecurity we're reluctant to admit to ourselves and admit to each other what needs to change. Because of our pride and laziness we'd rather deal with "general truths" that are easy to hold at arms length than let the truth come home. But the good news is we CAN change and community is the God-given context for growing followers of Jesus. You should spend more time discussing and praying through this question than any other.



SHARE

7. Who could you share all this with beyond your DNA group?

One of the big obstacles to growing as followers of Jesus is that we don't take our discoveries with us as we go about our everyday lives. And the best antidote to this problem is to be sharing our discoveries with others. Sharing with others is an awesome way of reinforcing our discoveries and driving them deeper down into our lived experience. In addition to the personal benefit, our discoveries have huge potential to deepen our relationships with our friends and to spur them on to be growing followers of Jesus too!



PRAY

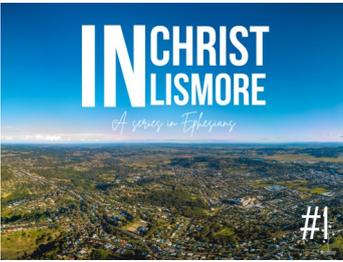
Pray for one another in response to what you've discovered in God's word and what you've shared.

Prayer is an ESSENTIAL dimension of every aspect of DNA. Prayer transforms what would otherwise be introspective reflection (preparing on our own) or interpersonal dialogue (talking to each other) into something truly spiritual.

We will only "discover" the powerful truths of a passage if God opens our eyes to see. We will only "nurture" one another effectively if our discussion is shaped by the wisdom of the gospel. We will only "apply" purposefully and powerfully in response to God's word if the Holy Spirit enables true heart change.

So make sure that prayer isn't a rushed activity at the end of your time together. Pray as you prepare. Pray at the beginning, during, AND at the end of your time together. Pray for yourselves and for each other throughout the week. Anyone should feel free to initiate prayer. Everyone should be encouraged to participate in prayer.

And one final piece of advice, don't fall into the trap of "sharing prayer points". It chews up valuable time and tends to put our concerns ahead of God's concerns. If its really important it will have come up already in response to God's word. And if it hasn't you can always just pray for it off the cuff—no point in everyone hearing it twice!



In Christ. In Lismore

Kick-off: before jumping into God's WORD, it's worth taking a few minutes to reflect on your own thoughts and attitudes and on the thoughts and attitudes you encounter in the WORLD...

1. What's the best Christmas present you've ever been given? What made it so good?

Discover: the "D" in DNA stands for DISCOVER. It's now time to read God's word and discover what God wants to teach us and why it matters...

Read Ephesians 1:1-14

2. What has God done for us?

- v 3

- v 4

- v 5

- v 6

- v 7

- v 8-10

- v 13-14

3. How many times is the phrase "in Christ" or "in him" used? What does it mean to be in Christ?

4. Is there a difference between being saved, forgiven, chosen, adopted, blessed *by* Christ compared to being saved, forgiven, chosen, adopted, blessed *in* Christ?

5. How should we respond to all that God has done for us in Christ (v3, 6, 12, 14)? Why is it good and fitting to respond this way?

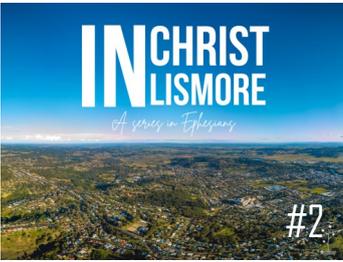
6. If we've been blessed so much by God, why do we often still feel discontent with our lives? How do these verses help?

Nurture & Apply: the "NA" in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God's word...

7. What does it look like for you to be a person who is both in Christ and in Lismore (or in the surrounding region)?

8. Thinking back to Ephesians 1:1-14, what are some ways that being in Christ ought to impact our experience of life in Lismore?

	Leadership Team	Wednesday 27th July
	Youth Launch	Friday 29th July
	Committee of Management	Wednesday 3rd August



Power in Christ

Kick-off: before jumping into God's WORD, it's worth taking a few minutes to reflect on your own thoughts and attitudes and on the thoughts and attitudes you encounter in the WORLD...

1. Do you think people pray?
2. What sort of things do you think fill people's prayers?

Discover: the "D" in DNA stands for DISCOVER. It's now time to read God's word and discover what God wants to teach us and why it matters...

Read Ephesians 1:15-23

3. When the apostle Paul heard of the Ephesians' faith, what was his response?
4. What is the goal of faith?
5. What is the significant power that is available to God's people?
6. The apostle keeps getting drawn to the amazing role and status that Christ has secured? Why?

7. As you reflect on this prayer, do your prayers seem somewhat anaemic? Why/Why not?

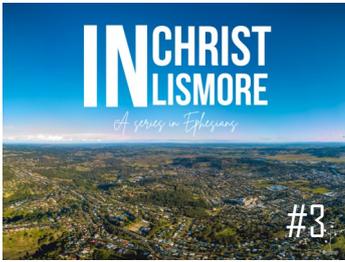
Nurture & Apply: the “NA” in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God’s word...

8. Prayer can often be our last resort. In Ephesians chapter one, it is the apostle's primary instinct as he hears of the believers’ faith. How could our reaction change to mirror that instinct?

9. Prayer was a dominant google search in the midst of the pandemic. Why do you think prayer is still crucial for humans?

10. Do you pray? What fills your prayers? Stop and pray!

	Committee of Management	Wednesday 3rd August
	YC1	Friday 5th August
	Young Adults Weekend Away (YAWA)	12th–14th August



United in Christ

Discover: the "D" in DNA stands for DISCOVER. It's now time to read God's word and discover what God wants to teach us and why it matters...

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

1. How does Paul describe the Ephesians before they became followers of Jesus?

2. What did they deserve because of their old way of life? Who else lived like this?

3. In verses 1-8, Paul writes in the past tense. What assurances do we get from this?

From verses 1-3 –

From verses 4-8 –

4. Paul encourages the Ephesians that the bleak picture painted in verses 1-3 is no longer true for them. Using words from verses 1-10, fill in the following table:

You once were...	But now you are...

Discuss how this is challenging and/or encouraging for you.

Read Ephesians 2:11-22

5. How does your reconciliation with God affect the way you treat others (believers and unbelievers)?

6. Now, considering our relationships with other believers, using words from verses 11-22, fill in the following table:

You once were...	But now you are...

Paul lived in a world where there were only two categories of humanity: Jew & Gentile. Between these two existed great hostility. Against this backdrop, Paul describes how Jesus has demolished the barrier between Jew and Gentile.

7. As well as tearing down the barrier between believers from ANY background, what has Jesus also done (v19-22)?

Nurture & Apply: the “NA” in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God’s word...

8. What walls of hostility do we sometimes build between each other? How does the cross abolish these?

9. How will this change your view of others in your church family? What changes will you make to live in unity with your Christian brothers and sisters?

	Young Adults Weekend Away (YAWA)	12th–14th August
	Young Adults Dinner	Sunday 28th August
	Preaching Group	Wednesday 31st August

Read Ephesians 3:14-21

In verse 14, Paul returns to his original thought (“For this reason...”), following on from speaking of the unity between Jew and Gentile believers. With this in mind, Paul’s heart overflows in joyful prayer.

6. What does Paul pray for the Ephesians?

7. What does it mean to be “rooted and established in love” (v17)?

Nurture & Apply: the “NA” in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God’s word...

Paul is clearly captivated by the Gospel of Jesus. When he talks about himself, he talks about Jesus. When he prays, he asks that others would grow in knowledge and love for Jesus – that Jesus would shape their lives as he has for Paul.

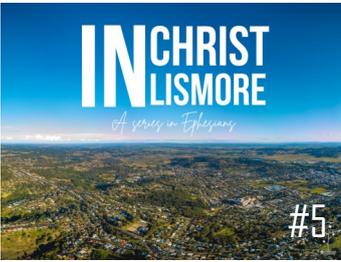
8. What sorts of things do we allow to shape our lives? Do they distract us from the importance of the Gospel?

9. Believing the Gospel and trusting Jesus is life-changing. Do we, therefore, need to change *everything* we do? What does need to change?

10. How can we help each other “to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ”?

How will you allow others to help you grow in this?

	Young Adults Dinner	Sunday 28th August
	Preaching Group	Wednesday 31st August
	Father’s Day	Sunday 4th September



Mature in Christ

Discover: the “D” in DNA stands for DISCOVER. It’s now time to read God’s word and discover what God wants to teach us and why it matters...

Chapters 1-3 have focussed on what God has done for us (always the best place to start!). Paul’s attention now turns to how we are to live in response to what God has done for us.

Read Ephesians 4:1-6

1. When do you find it hard to be humble and gentle?

2. What might be involved in “bearing with one another in love”?

Read Ephesians 4:7-13

3. What do these verses say about our differences as Christians? If we’re all different, how can we have unity?

4. According to verse 12, who is to do “works of service” within the church (the body of Christ)? Is this the way we usually see ministry in the church?

5. With different people using different gifts within the church, what are we being built up to (v12-13)?

6. In verses 12-13, Paul says it's not just knowledge that leads to maturity. What is it that leads to maturity in Christ? How do you think you could grow in this area?

Read Ephesians 4:14-16

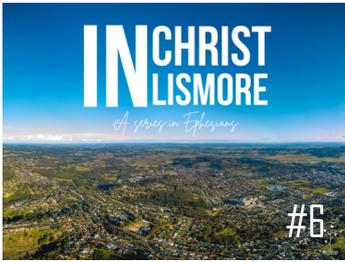
7. What illustrations does Paul use in these verses to depict a mature church? What do these illustrations mean?

Nurture & Apply: the "NA" in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God's word...

8. Discuss the roles of "truth" and "love" in building maturity. What happens if either one is lacking?

9. What steps will you take (specifically) to grow in love for others in your church family?

	Young Adults Dinner	Sunday 28th August
	Preaching Group	Wednesday 31st August
	Father's Day	Sunday 4th September



Our Walk in Christ

Kick-off: before jumping into God’s WORD, it’s worth taking a few minutes to reflect on your own thoughts and attitudes and on the thoughts and attitudes you encounter in the WORLD...

1. How do you think you go at shining out Jesus to those around you?

Discover: the “D” in DNA stands for DISCOVER. It’s now time to read God’s word and discover what God wants to teach us and why it matters...

Read Ephesians 4:17-32

2. This passage calls the Ephesian Christians to no longer live like Gentiles (*other nations*). What strong language does Paul use in describing them? Is this how you viewed yourself before you became a Christian? Is this how you view your unbelieving friends now? Discuss.

3. Who makes the difference for believers *‘to no longer live as the Gentiles do?’* How? (See Eph. 2:11-13).

4. Throughout this passage, most of the time, Paul first instructs the Ephesian Christians to stop something, then tells them to start something and then explains why. Record them in this table.

'Put off'/stop	'Put on'/start	Reason

Read Ephesians 5:1-14

5. Record the different ways Paul describes who believers now are.

6. Record in this table what we're called to and called to cast off as imitators of God.

Called to	To cast off

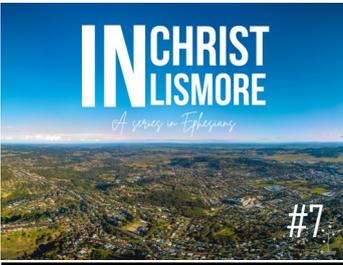
Read Ephesians 5:15-20

7. Verse 15 uses the word 'live', which is translated as 'walk' in other translations. Read these verses where 'live'/'walk' are used or suggested. Ephesians 2:2, 2:10, 4:1, 4:17, 5:2, 5:8 and 5:15. Why does Paul continue to use this word? What does Paul call believers to here?

Nurture & Apply: the "NA" in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God's word...

8. These passages are a strong call for believers to respond wholeheartedly to God in thanks. What parts particularly are convicting for you? Share and pray for each other.

	Preaching Group	Wednesday 31st August
	Father's Day	Sunday 4th September
	Leadership Team	Wednesday 7th September



Relationships in Christ

Kick-off: before jumping into God's WORD, it's worth taking a few minutes to reflect on your own thoughts and attitudes and on the thoughts and attitudes you encounter in the WORLD...

1. What answers would you get if you asked a hundred people in the Lismore region:

What is the purpose of marriage?

What is the most important aspect of parenting?

What is the purpose of work?

How would you answer those questions for yourself?

Discover: the "D" in DNA stands for DISCOVER. It's now time to read God's word and discover what God wants to teach us and why it matters...

Read Ephesians 5:21-6:9

2. Ephesians 5:21 is the heading and summary verse that stands over the whole section. Why is this verse so important, and how does it provide context to everything else that follows?

2. Paul urges wives to submit to their husbands and husbands to love their wives.

- a) What do verses 22-24 show us about what this submission is (and isn't)?
- b) What do verses 25-31 show us about what this love is (and isn't)?

3. From this passage, what is the purpose of marriage?

4. How does this passage and especially verses 31-32 help us from making too much or too little of marriage?

5. Paul intends to paint a beautiful Gospel-shaped picture of God’s good design for marriage. Like all of God’s good gifts, marriage can be corrupted and can become a source of pain and frustration. Why is this? And what can we do when we or those around us are not experiencing marriage as Paul describes here?

6. In 6:1-4, why do you think Paul gives the instructions that he does?

7. In 6:5-9, slaves and masters are in view. What sort of attitudes is Paul most concerned about? Why?

Nurture & Apply: the “NA” in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God’s word...

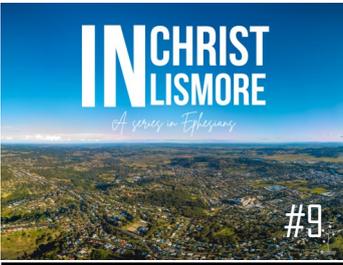
8. Do you think this has application for the workplace today or not? If so, is there something in particular that you need to put into practice from this?

	Leadership Team	Wednesday 7th September
	Celebration Sunday	Sunday 11th September
	SCG Camp	Sunday 11th September



Here is Love

NOTES



Standing Firm in Christ

Kick-off: before jumping into God's WORD, it's worth taking a few minutes to reflect on your own thoughts and attitudes and on the thoughts and attitudes you encounter in the WORLD...

1. Do you think belief in the supernatural is decreasing or increasing in our society today?

Discover: the "D" in DNA stands for DISCOVER. It's now time to read God's word and discover what God wants to teach us and why it matters...

Read Ephesians 6:10-24

2. Why does Paul need to provide a reminder about who our struggle is against?

3. Are you more likely to overlook or overemphasise the role of the devil? From this passage, what needs to shift in your perspective?

4. Ultimately, we resist the devil by standing firm in the Gospel. How is each aspect of the armour related to the Gospel?

5. Paul says to put on the *whole* armour of God. How are you going at putting on the whole armour of God? Is there a piece (or pieces) of armour you're not wearing?

6. Why is prayer vital to standing firm? What sort of prayers does Paul call God's people to here?

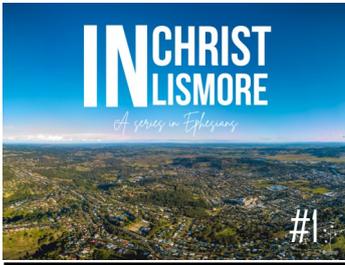
Nurture & Apply: the "NA" in DNA stands for Nurture & Apply. These questions are designed to help us care for each other and live out God's word...

7. How are you going with standing firm? (Choose the answer below that fits best)

- a) Standing firmly in Christ. I need to keep persevering just as I am now.
- b) In cruise control. Fairly forgetful of the battle I'm in.
- c) I see some serious warning signs that my faith is not in good shape.

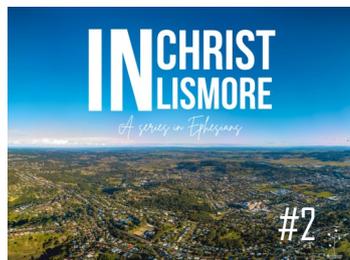
8. How can we help one another to stand firm and resist the devil?

	Committee of Management (Budget)	Wednesday 26th October
	Women's Retreat	Friday 4th–Saturday 5th November
	The Lounge Room	Wednesday 9th November



In Christ. In Lismore

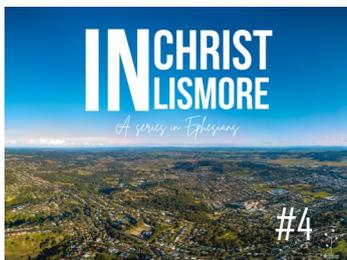
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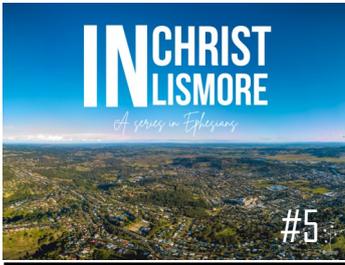
Power in Christ



United in Christ



Messengers of Christ

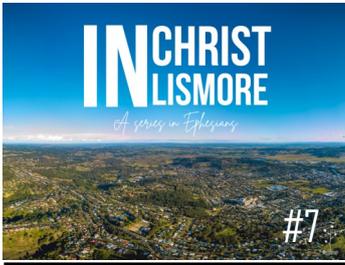


Mature in Christ

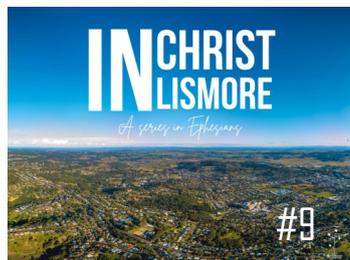
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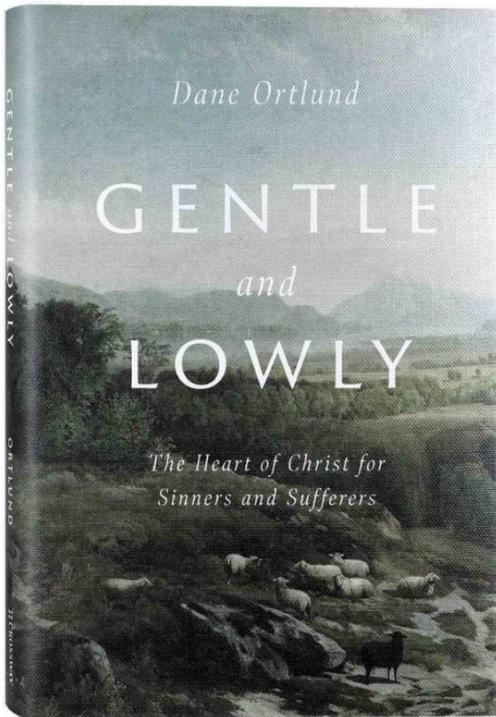
Our Walk in Christ



Relationships in Christ



Standing Firm in Christ



SCPC Book Club Term 3 2022

GENTLE AND LOWLY

READING SCHEDULE

DATE	CHAPTERS
18 July - 24 July	1-3
25 July - 31 July	4-6
1 Aug - 7 Aug	7-9
8 Aug - 14 Aug	10-12
15 Aug - 21 Aug	13-15
22 Aug - 28 Aug	16-18
29 Aug - 4 Sept	19-21
5 Sept - 11 Sept	22-23
Thursday 15 Sept	Discussion Night

COMING UP IN TERM 3...



YC 1

5 AUGUST, 2022

**HOSTED BY
ALSTONVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH**

Depart Park Ave - 6pm
Return to Park Ave - 9:30pm

YOUTH
ESTD 1948



**Young Adults
Weekend Away**

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12-14 AUGUST

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REGISTER WITH THE QR CODE





SAVE THE DATE IN TERM 4



