



RESOURCES

NEW YEAR VISION

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"The purpose of discipleship is to be with Jesus, to become like Jesus, and to live as Jesus did"

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JANUARY 2020 NEW YEAR VISION

At the start of each new term at HTB, our Sunday talks express the vision of the church. Our Connect Group resources follow the teaching of the services in order to provide a regular opportunity for groups to engage and wrestle with HTB's vision.

In order to reacquaint ourselves with the vision of HTB, this set of resources to be used over the course of January, has been made intentionally reflective; encouraging groups to be real and honest with each other about the everyday realities of praying, worshipping, serving and giving.

Our prayer for these studies is that they will provoke authentic discussion more than provide explicit answers, as we look with expectancy to the year ahead.

There are more studies on our vision and values available from previous terms [here](#).

WORSHIP & PRAYER

In Luke 18:1-8, Jesus emphasises that we should have an attitude toward prayer like that of a persistent widow. Jesus uses this illustration of tenacity and persistence to encourage us that our loving, just, gracious Father will bring about justice to those who call on him – in our worship and in our petitions – and we're invited to call on Him at all times, to point all those who hunger for provision and justice back to God with our own worship and prayer.

REFLECT

Depending on your group size and dynamics you may prefer to split into smaller groups for these discussions or to stay as one. Either way, do leave time for sharing all together at the end.

- When do we find it easy to worship and to pray? And when do we find it hard? Share tips, resources and lessons learnt with each other.
- Are you in a season where you feel close to God in worship and prayer, or more distant?
- Do you feel comfortable with gifts of the Holy Spirit? Are there any that you long to receive or to grow in? What would help you to gain the attitude of the persistent widow this year? Try to think of the most audacious yet precisely specific prayer you can think of.

RESPOND

Leave time to worship and pray at the end of your time together. Receive from and listen to God during the worship and then pray for each other. Share words and pictures with each other and pray audacious prayers for each member for the coming year. It may be worth a making a note of these bold prayers so that you can see how God will answer them over the coming year.

JANUARY 2020 NEW YEAR VISION:

GIVE

We aspire to be a people who give generously, not storing up our treasure here on earth but continually growing in the spiritual gift of giving and playing our part in creating a culture of generosity in our community.

REFLECT

Depending on your group size and dynamics you may prefer to split into smaller groups for these discussions or to stay as one. Either way, do leave time for sharing all together at the end.

- How do we feel about giving our time, our energy, our resources and our money to the church? Do you find it easier to give some of these things up than others?
- Share honestly any apprehensions or fears about giving.
- Biblical giving revolves around gratitude (2 Corinthians 9:7). What things are you thankful for from the last year? How has God provided? How has God been faithful?

RESPOND

Spend time thanking God for all that he has done in your lives and in the church, particularly over this last year.

Allow time, maybe with some reflective music on in the background, to rest in God's presence and listen to Him. Is there a sense that God is encouraging you to give more of your time, energy, resources or money in the year ahead?

JANUARY 2020

NEW YEAR VISION:

SERVE

"We the church have to set an example of unity to the world... what unites us is infinitely greater than what divides us." Nicky Gumble

Our call to be disciples of Christ invites us into a lifestyle of service and unity. We all have a part to play, and we should never discount our own importance – God has made you with unique gifts that play a part in making up the body of Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31.

REFLECT

Depending on your group size and dynamics you may prefer to split into smaller groups for these discussions or to stay as one. Either way, do leave time for sharing all together at the end.

- How are each of us serving God, both inside and beyond the church? To what extent are these places of service bringing you life and joy?
- What are your gifts? What are you good at and what do you enjoy? Do you feel that there is a place for your gifts to be used within the church?
- Do you feel that God has placed a particular calling on your life or in your heart? What steps have you taken to investigate / progress this?

RESPOND

We can often fail notice things that we are gifted at, and instead need others to call out and encourage potential giftings. One beautiful exercise that would be great to do at this point is to buy a little notebook or large greetings card for each person in the group and have all the other members anonymously write in what they love and appreciate about each other, as well as encouraging any gifts that they think they have. Play some reflective music in the background and invite the Holy Spirit to take the lead, establishing it as a prayerful moment of service to each other.

As with all the sessions in this resource, spend time listening to God for yourself and for each other. What may God be calling you into this year? Where might God be asking you to serve?

Ask these questions both individually, but also corporately as a group.