



# BIBLE READING PLAN

A 23 Day Bible reading plan for individuals or small groups

Welcome to the 2016 *Bible Month* Bible reading guide for the month of July. What follows are 23 daily readings and reflections that will help you grow deeper into God through his Word. Each daily devotion features a morning reading and encounter with the Scriptures, and a short evening reflection. Use this plan in a way that best suits you.

In the first set of readings, you'll learn more about the importance of studying the Bible carefully. The second set focuses on living God's Word out in our everyday lives and the third digs deep into one of the most famous and popular passages in all of Scripture – Psalm 23.

Use these devotions to build a regular habit of coming before the Lord with an open heart and mind, and of course an open Bible. May God bless you as you take this special journey this July.

*These daily reflections have been kindly provided by the UK Bible Society. Once you've finished this reading plan, you can get more daily reflections from the UK Bible Society's **Lyfe** website. Details are on the last page.*



# INTRODUCTION

## Day one – Word life

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Psalm 119:9 – 16

**REFLECT:** The writer of this Psalm knows the impact God's commands have on his life. He doesn't just skim read them or rote learn them. They seep into his joints and marrow (Hebrews 4:12), transforming the way he thinks. He meditates on them because he cherishes them more than anything else in the world. It's a total inside out change – a clean out of mind and soul.

Is this something you need too? As you approach the rest of this reading plan, ask God to help you study his teachings and follow in his footsteps.

**RESPOND:** Try and find 15 minutes or longer to read through some Scriptures today. You might want to start with a Psalm – the prayer book of the Bible. Start with a time of silence and then read slowly, asking for the Spirit to illuminate the Scriptures for you. End with a time of prayer.

### EVENING REFLECTION

Reflect on the way this day has unfolded: Where have I most clearly experienced the presence of God today in my home, community, work and the wider world?

*You, Lord, are all I want! You are my choice, and you keep me safe. You make my life pleasant, and my future is bright. I praise you, Lord, for being my guide. Even in the darkest night, your teachings fill my mind. I will always look to you, as you stand beside me and protect me from fear. With all my heart, I will celebrate, and I can safely rest. (Psalm 16 CEV)*

## PART 1 – STUDYING THE BIBLE

### Introduction to the week

Psalm 119:105 says, “Your Word is a lamp that gives light wherever I walk.” We have the amazing gift of the Bible - 66 books that collectively tell the story of God's interaction with his creation. But how often do we actually apply ourselves to properly studying it - to grapple with its structure, genres, imagery and language, authorship and context? There is so much wealth to be mined. This week we're going to look at why, how and when to get digging.

## Day two – Life-long learning

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Proverbs 1:5–9

**REFLECT:** Have you ever come across an anti-intellectual attitude among Christians? There are those who hold that discipleship is a matter of blind faith, simple trust, child-like obedience. They frown on theology degrees, biblical scholarship, critical analysis of any sort.

In this passage, the wise add to their learning, and their learning helps them understand proverbs, parables and riddles (1:5–6). They know that fearing God is the foundation - the starting point - but they build on it. They place high value on what they can learn from others, accepting instruction and listening to those who have something to teach (1:7).

**RESPOND:** What opportunities do you have to further your learning and grow in your understanding of the Bible? Is there a book you could read? A course you could sign up to? Consider ways you might invest in the intellectual side of your life with God.

### EVENING REFLECTION

*“Jesus made it unmistakably clear that the knowledge of the truth will set us free. ‘You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.’ (John 8:32). Good feelings will not free us. Getting ‘high on Jesus’ will not free us. Without a knowledge of the truth, we will not be free.” (Richard Foster)*

## Day three - Healthy eating

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Deuteronomy 8:1–5

**REFLECT:** The Israelites had lived in the wilderness for 40 years, absolutely dependent on God for their very survival. They were on the cusp of a much easier way of life in their own land, where they would be able to feed and clothe themselves, and grow prosperous and comfortable.

In this place, they would need to remember their need for God. They would need to hold onto the truth that humanity needs more than calories to fully live (8:3).

The Word of God is nourishing. It is necessary for our spiritual health. As we study it, God will use it to discipline us, and we will mature.

**RESPOND:** Are you living on 'bread alone'? Ask God to nourish you through his Word as you give it greater priority and attention in your life.

### EVENING REFLECTION

*Memorise his laws and tell them to your children over and over again. Talk about them all the time, whether you're at home or walking along the road or going to bed at night, or getting up in the morning. Write down copies and tie them to your wrists and foreheads to help you obey them.* (Deuteronomy 6:6–8, CEV)

## Day four - Study is a verb

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Psalm 119:9–16

**REFLECT:** For the psalmist, the scriptures are the key to living for God. And if we are so far uninspired about the discipline of study, the sheer enthusiasm and passion here might be just what we need. Studying does not mean sitting at a desk with a lot of fat, dusty books arrayed around us. It means applying our mind, our concentration and our energy on getting the very most from what we read.

Look at the verbs in our reading today - "I recount," "I rejoice," "I meditate," "I consider," "I delight." This is not a dry, dusty exercise. This is exciting stuff.

**RESPOND:** Think about your attitude to reading the Bible. What verbs might you use? What verbs would you like to use? Make this your promise today: *"I will not neglect your Word."* (119:16 NIV)

### EVENING REFLECTION

Lord God, thank you for the gift of your Word. I am sorry that sometimes I read it dismissively, passively, with no excitement or enthusiasm. Help me delight and rejoice, meditate and consider. Help me love the Scriptures as your son Jesus did. Amen.

## Day five - Know your weapons

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Matthew 4:1–11

**REFLECT:** In the ancient near-Middle East, the desert wasn't seen as a romantic retreat location, but was feared as Satan's territory. Jesus began his ministry by taking on the devil on his own ground, armed only with Scripture. And where Israel had failed all those generations before, Jesus triumphed.

If we look closely at how Jesus responds to the temptations thrown at him, we can see it is not a case of reciting memory verses. Satan himself can quote the Bible (4:6). Jesus has internalised deep truth; his very character and thoughts are shaped by his understanding of the whole Old Testament (the New Testament not being written at that point!). Jesus is armed and he knows how to use his weapons.

**RESPOND:** How might the Bible help you overcome your current struggles against the "spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places?" (Ephesians 6:12, ESV)

### EVENING REFLECTION

*"No weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication from me," declares the LORD.* (From Isaiah 54:17 NIV)

## Day six - Study buddy

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Luke 24:13–16, 25–32

**REFLECT:** The Bible is not always straightforward and it can seem like a daunting task to try and see how it fits together, what its authors intended as they wrote it and what the grand sweep of the narrative shows us about God and ourselves. These two disciples on the road to Emmaus were certainly struggling.

While we may not have the person of Jesus in physical form to talk us through the nuts and bolts of it, we are certainly not left to study Scripture alone. Our first help is the Holy Spirit, who will “*guide us into the full truth*” (John 16:13). We also have the help of the scholars, teachers and pastors who have invested their time and talent into wrestling over the big scriptural questions.

**RESPOND:** Ask Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, to walk with you as you grapple with the Bible - to show you more of him, and to open your eyes to truth.

### EVENING REFLECTION

*“It is uniquely in the Bible that we encounter Jesus. The message of the Bible is not just that help is coming - it has arrived:*

*‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand,’ Jesus said. So before you begin to read, acknowledge that Jesus is present with you.”* (John Ortberg)

## Day seven - The adrenalin sport that is Bible study

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Hebrews 4:12–13

**REFLECT:** Studying the Bible, as opposed to just reading it, gives it a far greater chance of transforming us. We will be exposed to its power in a more sustained and vulnerable way, and as the writer of Hebrews expresses so vividly, it isn’t exactly a safe thing to do!

Have you ever felt the Word of God uncover your desires and thoughts in an uncomfortable or even painful way? Have you felt it “cut through your spirit and soul”? If not, perhaps it’s time to stop reading and start studying.

**RESPOND:** “Nothing is hidden from God.” Thank God that he sees you - all of you - and looks on you with love.

### EVENING REFLECTION

*“Nothing can be so dry and lifeless for the church as making biblical study purely an academic exercise in historical investigation. Even though the Word was originally given in a concrete historical context, its uniqueness is that the historically given and conditioned Word is ever a living Word.”* (Gordon Fee and Douglas Stewart)

## Day eight - Godly diligence

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** I Timothy 4:6–16

**REFLECT:** Timothy is a young church leader, who has grown up in the faith (4:6) and who has the spiritual gifting needed for his role (4:14). But Paul’s message to him has a strong emphasis on the work he must do to grow in maturity and lead his people along straight paths: ‘work hard,’ ‘set an example,’ ‘be careful about what you teach.’

Few of us have the responsibility of leading a church, but we all have influence on those around us. We need to work at knowing, understanding and obeying the Bible, because in doing this, like Timothy, we will save not only ourselves, but potentially others too.

**RESPOND:** Lord, help me be diligent in training for godliness. Thank you for your promise of life now and forever. Amen.

### EVENING REFLECTION

God of my mind, help me use the intellect you have given me to the fullness of my ability when I read the Bible. Help me give time and energy to studying your Word, and through it, reveal yourself to me. Amen.

# PART 2 – LIVING IN THE WORD

## Introduction

This week we're going to focus on seven Gospel accounts. These are stories of Jesus encountering some broken, unhealthy, disordered and fallen people with great love and grace. Live with these stories each day, immerse yourself and imagine you're right there, encountering Jesus in the same way. Throughout the day you might wish to return to the stories, read them slowly over and over and see how the Holy Spirit leads you. Have the courage to allow God to speak to you directly through each passage.

## Day nine - Living in the Word

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Luke 8:26–39

**REFLECT:** This story is recalled in three of the Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke). As Jesus moves into Gentile territory, he breaks down barriers. He also allows himself to be drawn to things considered 'unclean' in Jewish tradition – a man possessed by evil spirits, living near tombs and near a herd of pigs. The man was violent, strong and estranged from his community. Jesus considered this man's healing and return to the community to be worth more than a herd of pigs. Restored, healed and clothed, Jesus asks this man to stay and evangelise the community.

**RESPOND:** Read this story slowly and as often as you are able. How might God wish to speak to you today?

### EVENING REFLECTION

Holy Spirit, living breath of God,  
breathe new life into my willing soul.

Let the presence of the risen Lord come  
renew my heart and make me whole.  
Cause Your Word to come alive in me;  
give me faith for what I cannot see,  
Give me passion for Your purity;  
Holy Spirit, breathe new life in me.  
(Keith Getty/Stuart Townend)

## Day ten - Living in the Word

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** John 8:1–11

**REFLECT:** As Jesus is addressed as 'Teacher', this story suggests an encounter with rival teachers of the law. Eyewitnesses had caught this woman in adultery with another man (who under the law was also guilty and punishable by death) and were therefore required to cast the first stone at her. Jesus is both compassionate towards the woman (though not condoning her sins), and superbly wise in his response to the Pharisees, who silently departed in acknowledgement of their own unworthiness to accuse her.

**RESPOND:** Read this story slowly and as often as you are able. How might God wish to speak to you today?

### EVENING REFLECTION

*"I'm unfinished. I'm unfixed. And the reality is that where God meets me is in the mess of my life, in the unfixedness, in the brokenness. I thought he did the opposite; he got rid of all that stuff. But if you read the Bible, if you look at it at all, constantly he was showing up in people's lives at the worst possible time of their life."* (Mike Yaconelli)

## Day eleven - Living in the Word

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** John 5:1–9

**REFLECT:** For thirty-eight years this man had been sick. His infirmity prevented him from getting into the stirred waters ahead of anyone else. Perhaps he thought Jesus might help him into the pool? He doesn't seem to have any faith in Jesus healing him directly. Jesus commands him to do the very thing he was unable to do – to get up and walk.

**RESPOND:** Read this story slowly and as often as you are able. How might God wish to speak to you today?

### EVENING REFLECTION

*"There is nothing terribly difficult in the Bible - at least in a technical way. The Bible is written in street language, common language. Most of it was oral and spoken to illiterate people. They were the first ones to receive it. So when we make everything academic, we lose something."* (Eugene Peterson)

## Day twelve - Living in the Word

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Mark 5:25–34

**REFLECT:** Jesus is on his way to Jairus' house to visit his dying daughter when a woman who had heard about Jesus touched his clothes. Doctors had failed to help her, but she receives

healing power from Jesus – not from his robe, but through faith in him. No wonder she was shaking with fear – for a woman to speak so personally in front of a crowd of people was costly and humbling. Jesus assures her of the healing she has now received.

**RESPOND:** Read this story slowly and as often as you're able. How might God wish to speak to you today?

#### EVENING REFLECTION

*Christ be in my waking, as the sun is rising, in my day of working, with me every hour. Christ be in my resting, as the day is ending, calming and refreshing, watching through the night.*

*Jesus, this is my devotion: All my life to know You, every day to walk with You. Saviour, You're my deepest longing, You're the One I live for, teach me, Lord, to walk with You.*  
(Stuart Townend)

## Day thirteen - Living in the Word

#### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Luke 23:32–43

**REFLECT:** Luke tells us that Jesus was crucified between two criminals. In Mark and Matthew we are told they are thieves. The thief (who seems to have a change of heart) makes the point that they are being punished justly, they have broken the law and their suffering is in response to that. Jesus however is innocent. Jesus offers him far more than he asks for – he would have a place in the kingdom. But even more, that day itself, he would enter Paradise – a Persian word for 'garden' a place of bliss, a place associated with Jesus himself.

**RESPOND:** Read this story slowly and as often as you are able. How might God wish to speak to you today?

#### EVENING REFLECTION

*It is wonderful to be grateful  
and to sing your praises,  
Lord Most High!*

*It is wonderful each morning  
to tell about your love  
and at night to announce  
how faithful you are.*

*I enjoy praising your name  
to the music of harps,  
because everything you do  
makes me happy,  
and I sing joyful songs.*  
(from Psalm 92, CEV)

## Day fourteen - Living in the Word

#### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Mark 10:17–22

**REFLECT:** Most people came to Jesus in great need and distress and left joyful. This is the only person recorded in the New Testament to have left Jesus with sadness. Although Jesus 'liked him' he would not lower the demands of discipleship to make an exception for him. His wealth was the thing that held him back from being a disciple. The other disciples had left everything to follow Jesus.

**RESPOND:** Read this story slowly and as often as you are able. How might God wish to speak to you today?

#### EVENING REFLECTION

*"Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him."*

(Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

## Day fifteen - Living in the Word

#### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** John 21:15–19

**REFLECT:** Here Jesus specifically calls out Peter to re-commission him. Jesus may have given him three opportunities to express his love for him because of his three denials. The call to 'feed my sheep' was a call to pastorally care for and provide spiritual nourishment to believers. To 'hold out your hands' was a familiar illusion to crucifixion. Peter was to literally take up his cross and follow Jesus.

**RESPOND:** Read this story slowly and as often as you are able. How might God wish to speak to you today?

#### EVENING REFLECTION

*"What makes authentic disciples is not visions, ecstasies, biblical mastery of chapter and verse, or spectacular success in the ministry, but a capacity for faithfulness. Buffeted by the fickle winds of failure, battered by their own unruly emotions, and bruised by rejection and ridicule, authentic disciples may have stumbled and frequently fallen, endured lapses and relapses, gotten handcuffed to the fleshpots and wandered into a far country. Yet, they kept coming back to Jesus." (Brennan Manning)*



# PART 3 – PSALM 23

## Introduction

This week we're going to focus on Psalm 23 by breaking it down into sections for each day. Perhaps one of the most famous of Psalms, it has inspired countless works of art and music and is often read at funerals (even though it's not about death). This Psalm is an invitation to a way of life lived in the presence of an attentive and gracious God.

Psalm 23 was one of American Dallas Willard's favourite Scriptures; in fact he made it his practice to meditate on it every morning as he woke. Perhaps you will consider waking each day this week to these beautiful words also?

## Psalm 23: The Good Shepherd (NLT)

*The Lord is my shepherd;  
I have all that I need.*

*He lets me rest in green meadows;  
he leads me beside peaceful streams.*

*He renews my strength.*

*He guides me along right paths,  
bringing honour to his name.*

*Even when I walk  
through the darkest valley,*

*I will not be afraid,  
for you are close beside me.*

*Your rod and your staff  
protect and comfort me.*

*You prepare a feast for me  
in the presence of my enemies.*

*You honour me by anointing my head with oil.  
My cup overflows with blessings.*

*Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me  
all the days of my life,*

*and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.*

## Day sixteen – My Shepherd

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need.

**REFLECT:** The Psalms often refer to God as King or Deliverer. Here, the Lord is a shepherd - a most intimate metaphor. As David knew first hand, a shepherd was responsible for the sheep; he was their protector, provider and physician. To not be in need is not that we don't require anything. It really means being settled in the knowledge that God knows what we require and will provide.

**RESPOND:** Think of God as your shepherd today. If shepherd doesn't work for you – consider what would be a good alternative metaphor?

### EVENING REFLECTION

*There are many who say,  
"Who will show us any good?"  
Lord, lift up the light of Your countenance upon us.  
You have put gladness in my heart,  
More than in the season that their grain and wine increased.  
I will both lie down in peace, and sleep;  
For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.  
(Psalm 4, NKJV)*

## Day seventeen – Refresh my life

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength.

**REFLECT:** An important part of a shepherd's role, was to consider provision of food, water and places to rest. This part of the Psalm can refer to sheep that need retrieving because they are lost or reviving because they are tired. God is committed to restoring us and renewing us.

**RESPOND:** Where can you find a place of rest today? Jesus was incredibly busy, but took time out to be alone with his Father. Where and when can you do this today?

### EVENING REFLECTION

Lord, we do not know what today or this week may bring, but you do. We rest in your plan and in your goodness. Help us surrender control to you rather than trying to take it into our own hands. Amen.

## Day eighteen – Lead me Lord

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** He guides me along right paths, bringing honour to his name.

**REFLECT:** God alone is our true north. He alone can lead us in ways that are right and good for us. 'Right paths' reflect his character and bring benefits to us. However in our weakness we are often tempted astray and as the hymn *Come Thou Font of Every Blessing* says: "we are Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love." Which wrong roads or paths have you taken recently? Lord please lead us in good ways today and forgive our weakness and shortcomings.

**RESPOND:** Confession is a wonderful gift to us when we have wandered. Confess wrong attitudes, thoughts and actions before God today and if it would be helpful – to a friend or someone else that you trust.

*"Precious Saviour, why do I fear your scrutiny? Yours is an examen of love. Still, I am afraid... afraid of what may surface. Even so, I invite you to search me to the depths so that I may know myself – and you – in fuller measure."*  
(Richard Foster)

### EVENING REFLECTION

*Be thou my wisdom and Thou my true Word;  
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord.  
Thou my great Father, I, Thy true son.  
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one.*  
(From the Hymn Be Thou My Vision)

## Day nineteen – Fear not the dark valleys

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid

**REFLECT:** The 'right paths' may include dark valleys as well as green pastures. A dark valley could refer to a time proceeding death, but could also include a dark place to hide to cover up wrong actions, rebellion against God, confusion, sadness, or lonely places. It is a rich phrase that includes all of life's overwhelming experiences. God's presence with us remains and he may be inviting us to draw ever closer to him.

**RESPOND:** What overwhelming times are you or people you know going through today? Bring them before God in prayer and ask for his presence, help and guidance.

### EVENING REFLECTION

*"God of the day and of the night, in me there is darkness, but with you there is light. I am alone, but you will not leave me. I am weak, but you will come to my help. I am restless, but you are my peace. I am in haste, but you are the God of infinite patience. I am confused and lost, but you are eternal wisdom and you direct my path; now and forever. Amen."*  
– Dietrich Bonhoeffer

## Day twenty – Rescue me

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** ...for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.

**REFLECT:** The Psalm begins with the Good Shepherd leading the sheep from the front. Here in the place of darkness; the emphasis now is on the shepherd alongside the sheep and escorting them through the valley. The rod is an instrument of defence (protection) or sometimes used to rescue sheep, perhaps dragging them out of a river or a thicket.

**RESPOND:** Whenever you feel overwhelmed today, dwell on these words of comfort. Remind yourself that God is with you today and he cares for you.

### EVENING REFLECTION

Our Father, we praise you for the day you gave us!  
Please guard us tonight and help us wake up ready to be transformed by you tomorrow. Holy Spirit, lead and guide us. We surrender our desire to be in control. Thank you for the joy you produce in us! Amen.

## Day twenty one – A place at his table

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honour me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings.

**REFLECT:** To feast is to celebrate God's goodness in his presence. The Psalm moves from the metaphor of shepherd to king. To be a guest of the King, to have a place at 'his table' (as it says in other translations) is a place of honour. If you are feeling soul weary today then reflect on these words a little longer.

**RESPOND:** As you take time to eat and drink today, make time to be thankful. Eat slowly; enjoy the simple gift of food and the ability to taste. Reflect on the energy and strength that food and drink provide. Why not plan a proper feast or celebration for another time this week?

### EVENING REFLECTION

Lord Most High,

Today was a difficult day for some of us. For others it was good and pleasant. Regardless of what this past day brought, Lord, I come to you tonight in need of your peace. As I sit in your presence this evening, please give me comfort and encouragement while also instructing and training me where necessary. You are my hope and my joy! Help me to place all of my trust in you; I can't do it all on my own. Help me surrender the things to which I cling so tightly. I trust you, Father. Amen.



## Day twenty two – Eternal living

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the Lord forever.

**REFLECT:** Whilst there could be a sense of destination or of journeying home at the end of this Psalm, the emphasis isn't on the end of our lives – but rather this is our life now. Dallas Willard liked the phrase 'eternal living' which has in our own lives, already begun. It is a life lived in *"interactive, co-operative and communicative relationship with God in God's present and coming kingdom."*

**RESPOND:** How can you live today with constant or at least regular interaction with God? How can you remind yourself today of his constant kindness and love?

### EVENING REFLECTION

You are my God. I worship you. In my heart, I long for you, as I would long for a stream in a scorching desert. I have seen your power and your glory in the place of worship. Your love means more than life to me, and I praise you. As long as I live, I will pray to you. I will sing joyful praises and be filled with excitement like a guest at a banquet. (From Psalm 63, CEV)

## OUTRO

## Day twenty three - Recalibrate

### MORNING ENCOUNTER

**READ:** Colossians 3:16–17

**REFLECT:** Gratitude sustains our soul, joy is strength. As we hit the end of the week we can so easily become exhausted and weary in both body and soul. This is a day to focus on God as much as we can and a time to be thankful. Gratitude does not grow through acquiring more or doing more, it comes as we look for the good in our lives and thank God for it.

**RESPOND:** As you think back over the last few weeks, how has God met you as you've progressed through this reading plan? What are you grateful for?

### EVENING REFLECTION

*"The ability to express gratitude is one of the fundamental signs of life and spiritual wholeness. People who practice gratitude recognise that all of life is a gift from God. They discipline themselves to turn from chronic discontent, complaining, judgment, and dissatisfaction. They learn to be grateful for imperfect gifts and persevere through times of anxiety and frustration. Grateful people express their heart openly and consistently, devote themselves to worshipping God, and intentionally look for areas in their life for which they need to be thankful." (John Ortberg)*

If you've enjoyed these daily reflections, you can get more from the UK Bible Society's Lyfe resource online. There are also some fantastic Lyfe small group resources that will get your discipleship group digging deeper into Scripture. It's all online and free at: <http://www.biblesociety.org.uk/about-bible-society/our-work/lyfe/> (scroll down to Lyfe news for the daily reflections)