

MOTHER'S DAY

Date: Sunday 11th May

Dear CG Leader,

We want you to feel equipped and blessed and are therefore now including a Staff Meeting message each Campaign we send. It's a great resource to listen to on the way to work or some other time you're free.

We know this message from Andy Byers, our Kids Overseer at Northern Beaches Location, will really equip you in 'being likeable' and building your cg. Plus, it will also give you some wonderful hearty laughs!

[8. 9th of April - Andy Byers - Being Likeable Pt 2.mp3](#)

- Connect Team

Announcements:

<p>Online Prayer</p>	<p><i>If someone in your connect group can't make it to a face-to-face prayer meeting, our Online Prayer Meeting is a great alternative! It is open to everyone across all locations. Runs every Tuesday night from 6:30–7:10pm and is a fresh, anointed, and engaging 40-minute prayer meeting, centrally led.</i></p> <p><i>This isn't just watching someone pray, it's a powerful time where we all pray together. People are walking, praying, speaking in tongues, and leaning in together online.</i></p> <p>Here's the link to join or share: https://c3syd.church/prayer/</p>
<p>Foundations 14th May</p>	<p><i>Our online Foundations Course starts on Wednesday 14th May 2025 during the evenings and runs weekly for 5 weeks. Please encourage any new believers in your connect group to attend this significant course to help them establish strong foundations, even if the course runs on your connect group night.</i></p> <p><i>Please stay in touch with them to help them plug into community, gather them to church, answer any questions they may have and then resume attending your cg once the course finishes. (Of course, if your cg meeting doesn't clash with the Foundations course, and the new believer is up for it, they could attend both meetings – Foundations and your Connect Group.)</i></p> <p><i>The Sunday following the last week of the Foundations Course will be a Holy Spirit Baptism Sunday at all Locations.</i></p> <p>Here's a link to the website for more information: https://c3syd.church/next-step-foundations/</p>
<p>Vision Builders</p>	<p><i>Our annual Vision Builders Dinner is happening on Friday 20th June at 7pm at the ICC Grand Ballroom, Darling Harbour.</i></p> <p><i>This is a special night where we gather as one church family to celebrate all that God is doing and give toward the vision we're building together.</i></p> <p><i>Please encourage everyone in your connect group to plan ahead and be there. It's also a great opportunity to make it a shared night out, plan carpools and come expectant for what God will do.</i></p> <p><i>Encourage your group to register via the text message they've received. If anyone hasn't received the text, please direct them to the website to register: https://c3syd.church/visionbuilders/</i></p>

Connect Questions

- **Week 1:**

11th May 2025

Please Dear CG Leader,

Below are some questions for you to use with your connect group. Please choose the questions you feel most applicable or best fit for your cg. Thank you and have a fabulous discussion and time together.

1. A mother's love nurtures, protects, and sacrifices. Discuss examples from your own mother or people you know.
2. God longs to give protection and care to all people. How have you seen this in your own life?
3. How can we nurture, protect and sacrifice for those we are trying to bring to God?
4. God's love does not give up on us, even when we struggle or feel distant. Share any promises in scripture that have helped you through times of feeling God is distant.
5. God's love is restorative love, it is not passive. Have you experienced God pursuing you?
6. A mother's prayers are powerful and there are many examples of mothers who never gave up hope that their children would find God. Who are you praying for, that God would pursue and reveal Himself to?
7. Jesus said He longed to gather people to Himself like a mother hen. How have you heard Jesus calling you to Himself?

Week 1: Mother's Day

Date: Sunday 11th May 2025

Key Scripture: Matthew 23:37-39

Key Point of this week: The heart of a mother is something that can be understood even by those who have never been mothers themselves. It is a love that nurtures, protects, and sacrifices. Even for those who may not have experienced a protective mother, there is still an innate understanding of what a mother *should* be. And for those who have experienced loss—whether of a mother or of that kind of love—the hope is that scripture will reveal the protection and care that God longs to give.

Matthew 23:37

³⁷Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.

In this passage, Jesus uses the imagery of a mother to express his love and sorrow. He speaks of the role he desired to have with the people of Israel—a role that he desires to have with each of us. Jesus describes the role he would have *rather* held in relationship to the people of Israel, the role he would prefer to have with YOU! His heart reflects the essence of a mother's heart: one that longs to nourish, nurture, and protect. He doesn't simply stand at a distance but instead desires to step into every area of our lives, drawing us close under his care. He wants to step in, into all areas of your life.

We need to consider how God's love has mirrored the sacrifices and joys of a mother's heart.

One of the most tender images he gives is that of a hen gathering her chicks under her wings. This simple but powerful picture reveals what Jesus longed to do for those who rejected him.

- He wanted to make them safe
- Part of a blessed community,
- Promote their growth
- To know His love.

But this could only happen if they were willing to come to him when he called. As one scholar, Carson, puts it, "Jesus' longing can only belong to Israel's Savior, not to one of her prophets." His desire to gather and protect was more than just a passing wish—it was the deep cry of the Savior's heart.

As we reflect on Mother's Day, we see how this same love is connected to the great harvest—the gathering of souls that God longs for. When we sin, God does not turn away in anger or hatred. Instead, his heart genuinely breaks for us, knowing that our rebellion only leads to destruction. Rather than condemning, he longs for us to return, and we, in turn, should share in his sorrow for lost humanity.

This longing is beautifully expressed in Isaiah 60:4-5:

⁴Lift up your eyes and look about you; all assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip. ⁵Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy."

Isaiah shows us that God’s love is restorative love, it is not passive—it’s active and powerful. It is a love that calls people back, that sees brokenness and does not turn away. Just as a mother pushes through exhaustion to care for her children, God’s love does not give up on us, even when we struggle or feel distant. It’s the kind of love that sees us at our lowest and still believes in our potential, calling us back to joy and wholeness.

This is the heart of God—the heart of a mother—reaching out to gather his children home.

Key References:

<https://canonjohn.com/2022/03/17/mothers-in-tough-times/>

<https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/23/Matthew-23-37.html>

<https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/matthew-23/>