

Abundant Harvest

Stepping Stones | September and October 2025



Welcome to this study guide for
Creation Season 2025

ABIDE groups are a chance to pause, connect, and explore life's big questions together. Please join us at the Vicarage on Wednesdays at 7pm and on Fridays at 10.30am. Everyone is welcome to join the conversation, share ideas, and discover fresh perspectives in a relaxed setting.

7pm Wed 10 Sept and 10.30am Fri 12 Sept

What is worth our worship?

7pm Wed 17 Sept and 10.30am Fri 19 Sept

How do we measure worth?

7pm Wed 24 Sept and 10.30am Fri 26 Sept

Why does work matter so much?

7pm Wed 1 Oct and 10.30am Fri 3 Oct

What is worth worrying about?

7pm Wed 8 Oct and 10.30am Fri 10 Oct

Why is wisdom worth it?

Abundant Harvest

Stepping Stones | September and October 2025



Week 1 --- Sunday 7th September *What is worth your worship?*

Psalm 139:1–5, 12–18

You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand—when I awake, I am still with you.

Luke 14:25–33

Large crowds were travelling with Jesus; and he turned and said to them, 'Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when

he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule him, saying, "This fellow began to build and was not able to finish." Or what king, going out to wage war against another king, will not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot, then, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for the terms of peace. So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.'

One | What Stands Out?

Look at how the Gospel story begins. When you hear "large crowd," what real-life gathering from your own experience comes to mind — and was it exciting, exhausting, or overwhelming for you?

Two | What Does It Mean?

What do you think Jesus wanted the crowd to understand about following him?

Three | How Does It Connect?

Psalm 139 gives us many images of intimacy with God — being searched and known, being hemmed in behind and before, being knit together in the womb, being wonderfully made. Which image is most powerful for you today as you consider the challenge of following Jesus?

Four | What Are the Deeper Questions?

The same Jesus who says here, "*Whoever does not carry the cross and follow me cannot be my disciple,*" elsewhere says, "*Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give*

Abundant Harvest

Stepping Stones | September and October 2025

you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” How can both voices be heard without silencing one or the other?

Five | What Challenges You?

The gospel pictures discipleship as weighing costs — towers half-built, battles judged, crosses carried. The psalm places us inside God’s immensity, where our lives seem small against the vastness of his thoughts.

Together they pull in different directions: the weight of our choices, and the sense of our insignificance. In that tension, how do you measure the value your worship carries in your life — and how might Jesus measure it?

Six | How Will You Respond?

Creationtide points us toward God’s abundant harvest. If worship is to grow and bear fruit, what might need to change, grow, or deepen in you so that your life joins in God’s renewing work for creation?



Week 2 --- Sunday 14th September *How do we measure worth?*

Luke 15:1–10

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, ‘This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.’ So he told them this parable: ‘Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, saying to them, “Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.” Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying,

“Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.” Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.’

Psalm 113

Praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord, you his servants; praise the name of the Lord. Let the name of the Lord be praised, both now and for evermore. From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised. The Lord is exalted over all the nations, his glory above the heavens. Who is like the Lord our God, the One who sits enthroned on high, who stoops down to look on the heavens and the earth? He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes, with the princes of his people. He settles the childless woman in her home as a happy mother of children.

Praise the Lord.

Abundant Harvest

Stepping Stones | September and October 2025

One | What Stands Out?

Think of the effort of searching — pulling cushions apart to find the remote, walking a field looking for a lost animal, checking pockets again and again for money or keys. As you hear Jesus' story of the lost sheep and the lost coin, what memory of searching comes back most strongly for you?

Two | What Does It Mean?

In these parables Jesus places himself in the role of the searching shepherd. What familiar picture of God does that give to the crowd listening?

Three | How Does It Connect?

If the gospel also shows Jesus sweeping the floorboards, crawling under the furniture for a single lost coin, then Psalm 113 goes further, showing God down in the ash heap, hands dirty in the dust and cinders. Does it seem that God sees holiness differently from the dictionary?

Four | What Are the Deeper Questions?

The shepherd risks the flock, the woman throws a party worth more than the coins - the maths doesn't work. If this is how God counts worth, how might it upset the scales, alongside last week's call to count the cost?

Five | What Challenges You?

Jesus' stories put heaven's joy on one sheep and one coin, while the conservationist treasures the smallest bird or insect. Where does that challenge your own way of measuring worth?

Six | How Will You Respond?

Creationtide reminds us that every part of God's world has value. Choose one small gesture — perhaps leaving water out for birds, planting a seed, picking up a piece of litter, or carrying a snail to safety — to help your worship take root in creation. What might you learn about your own worth by doing this?



Week 3 --- Sunday 21st September

Why does work matter so much?

Psalm 15

Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain? The one whose way of life is blameless, who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from their heart; whose tongue utters no slander, who does no wrong to a neighbour, and casts no slur on others; who despises a vile person but honours those who fear the Lord; who keeps an oath even when it hurts and does not change their mind; who lends money to the poor without interest and does not accept a bribe against the innocent. Whoever does these things will never be shaken.

Luke 16:1-13

Jesus said to the disciples, 'There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. So he summoned him and said, "What is this that I hear about you? Give me an account of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer." Then the manager said to himself, "What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes." So,

Abundant Harvest

Stepping Stones | September and October 2025

summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, "How much do you owe my master?" He answered, "A hundred jugs of olive oil." He said to him, "Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty." Then he asked another, "And how much do you owe?" He replied, "A hundred containers of wheat." He said to him, "Take your bill and make it eighty." And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes. Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.'

One | What Stands Out?

Studies show that our relationship with money is formed from the age of seven, which might explain why so many of us find it hard to change it. Spend some time reflecting on your earliest experiences of work and of handling money of your own.

Two | What Does It Mean?

According to Psalm 15, what kinds of things does God notice in daily life?

Three | How Does It Connect?

How would the rich man use Psalm 15 to assess the performance of his steward?

Four | What Are the Deeper Questions?

The steward is not held up as a hero of honesty. And yet Jesus uses him to unsettle us — to make us think about how we use what is entrusted to us. Stewardship is never only about money. It is about the way we handle people, relationships, responsibilities, and the whole of creation. If this steward can act decisively when his back is against the wall, how much more should we, the children of light, act wisely with the gifts God has placed in our hands?

Five | What Challenges You?

Are you satisfied with this answer to the question "Why does work matter so much?"

Psalm 15 told us that integrity in ordinary dealings is what makes us fit to stand in God's presence. Luke 16 challenged us to be faithful in small things, trustworthy with what is placed in our hands. Together they teach us that the truest worship is not measured by hymns or prayers, but by the honesty of our work, the fairness of our choices, and the care we take with what belongs to God. So as we go out week by week from church, we don't close the book and tick off another service done. We open the door and step into the real liturgy of life. Our Monday is our altar. Our daily tasks are our offerings. Our neighbours are our congregation. Worship begins now.

Abundant Harvest

Stepping Stones | September and October 2025

Six | How Will You Respond?

Choose some of these groups, or others of your own, and commit to pray daily for people who work in these categories throughout the coming week:

1. Farming, fishing, and all who work the land
2. Commerce, industry, banking, and financial stewardship
3. Governance, public service, and those shaping policy
4. Those whose work is unfulfilling, stressful, or fraught with danger
5. All who are unemployed or seeking fair work
6. Education: schools, colleges, universities, and all who teach
7. Health care: medical, nursing, mental health, and social care professionals
8. Emergency, rescue, and safety services
9. Media, arts, and those shaping culture and public imagination
10. Work that cares for creation: conservation, sustainability, and environmental protection
11. Those whose work is hidden or unnoticed, yet essential
12. Work that fosters justice, reconciliation, and peace
13. All who work in scientific research and innovation
14. Volunteers and those serving in local communities
15. Those who balance multiple responsibilities at home, work, and society



Week 4 --- Sunday 28th September *What is worth worrying about?*

Psalm 37:1-9

Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away.

Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: he will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun.

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.

Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil.

For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.

Abundant Harvest

Stepping Stones | September and October 2025

Luke 16:19–31

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. At his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried.

In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. He called out, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames."

But Abraham said, "Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us."

He said, "Then, father, I beg you to send him to my father's house—for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment."

Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them." He said, "No, father Abraham; but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent."

He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

One | What Stands Out?

If this parable in Luke 16:19–31 was staged as a medieval mystery play, how many cast members would you need?

Two | What Does It Mean?

Work out each of the stages in the rich man's story.

Three | How Does It Connect?

Let's suppose that the poor man knows his scriptures well. How does it feel to imagine Lazarus at the start of the story meditating on the words of Psalm 37:1–9?

Four | What Are the Deeper Questions?

Scholars have said that "the parable of Lazarus and the rich man is not a doctrinal map of the afterlife—it's a grotesque morality tale designed to disturb, not to instruct." What do you think?

Five | What Challenges You?

The psalm says, "do not fret." It calls us to lay down our worries, to let go of the burdens we carry, to trust God with what we cannot control. The parable says, "wake up." It confronts us with what we overlook, with the injustices we ignore, with the people at our gate we fail to see. What do these texts teach you about the difference between worry that depletes us—and concern that leads to justice?

Six | How Will You Respond?

Creationtide calls us to notice what we've overlooked. This week, walk past a gate you usually ignore—a boundary, a habit, a person, a patch of land—and stop. Pay attention. What does it ask of you? What does it reveal about the kind of concern that leads to healing?

Abundant Harvest

Stepping Stones | September and October 2025



Week 5 --- Sunday 5th October *Why is wisdom worth it?*

Psalm 67

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face shine on us, so that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations. May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. May the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you rule the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth. May the peoples praise you, God; may all the peoples praise you. The land yields its harvest; God, our God, blesses us. May God bless us still, so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

Luke 17:5-6

The apostles said to the Lord, “Increase our faith!”

The Lord replied, “If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, ‘Be uprooted and planted in the sea,’ and it would obey you.”

One | What Stands Out?

Which of the readings would you choose to make a Harvest banner?

Two | What Does It Mean?

Jesus answers the disciples’ request for more faith with a wild image — a tree growing in the sea. What does this exaggerated picture tell us about what really matters in faith?

Three | How Does It Connect?

Look at Psalm 67. Both readings use harvest and growth to point to God’s power and blessing. They remind us too that God invites us to cooperate in creation. What does it mean to have a Harvest faith?

Four | What Are the Deeper Questions?

I heard recently that God gave us grain and not bread, grapes and not wine. It is only through created things — and above all through Jesus who joined us within the creation he brought into being — that God can be known by us. What do you think?

Five | What Challenges You?

Faith on its own can look impressive, but without wisdom it can lose its way. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13 that even if he had faith to move mountains, even if he gave away all he had, even if he gave his body to be burned — without love it was nothing. How does that challenge us to see that true faith needs wisdom, love, and care if it is to bear fruit in creation and in our lives?

Six | How Will You Respond?

Just because we can, doesn’t mean we should. Wisdom is knowing when to act, and when to refrain, so that creation is honoured and not harmed. This Harvest, what one choice can you make — in how you eat, shop, travel, or use resources — that shows faith working with wisdom for the sake of God’s world?