

# Touch the Sky

**James 1:1-17, Matthew 23:12, 1 Peter 5:5-7, Genesis 22:17-18**

God sees what we don't see. God's wisdom and God's economy is different than the world's. Jesus took the wisdom of the world and turned it on its head, dangerously declaring that people who are humble and disregarded according to the world's standards are those whose lives, when surrendered to God will receive his promise and blessing.

We find with Jesus, the way up is down. God's will is to elevate us and see us exalted, fruitful and blessed. The way to touch the sky, to receive God's promises, is not to chase after the stars. Instead, we see God and are lifted up when we stay committed, grounded, and focused on Him. We stay in touch with his promise and purpose, as we live a humble, lovingly obedient life of sacrifice to Him.

Surrendered to Jesus, we enter into God's promise. Focused on Jesus, we keep ourselves from a spirit of entitlement that grows from familiarity, pride, and presumption. We humbly serve each other, as we are grounded in his promise, and maintain wide eyed wonder of our good God. With grace and gratitude we fall upward into the promise of his blessing, fruitfulness and provision.

God wants to sustain us. He doesn't want us to be like shooting stars whose light looks wonderful for a moment and fades out. God, the Father of Lights, it is his will to touch our lives, enabling us to use the gifts and talents he gave us, to live lives open to God-given possibility and opportunity. We decide to anchor ourselves to God's word and promise, and together, with his spirit of servanthood, sacrifice and humility, we trust in his name and faithfulness. We know it is only by his grace we have come this far and in hope, we look towards our beautiful, incredible future with Him.

## ***Church Highlights***

- Hillsong Conference, register online: [hillsong.com/conference](https://hillsong.com/conference)
- Mother's Day (Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May) – We will be celebrating and honouring all the mums! Mobilise your group to bring mums to church on this special occasion.

## ***Pray Together***

- Salvations, that people come to know Jesus
- Pastor Brian and Bobbie Houston
- Colour Conference

## ***Nation Builders***

We can make a difference as a connect group by praying for the Nation Builders causes we support and by giving together. Our offering extends the reach of our church locally to reach and influence the world for Jesus.

# Touch the Sky

## Connection and Action

Questions to promote conversation and connection

**Q** Who is an example of humility in your life today? How have you seen them demonstrate and show humility to God and others?

**Q** Contrast a spirit of entitlement and a spirit of humility. How are they different?

**Q** How can we guard against entitlement and promote humility in ourselves?

**Q** How can we be both confident *and* humble?

**Q** What gifts and talents do you have that you can see God using to build his church? How will humility help you use these?

**Q** What type of promises and blessings, if you were to receive them, would you consider to be “touching the sky”?

## Bible and Belief

Questions to help believers develop a biblical world view

### Read James 1:1-17

**Q** What are your first impressions of this passage? Are there verses that are difficult or troublesome?

**Q** Describe the context James was writing into. What verses give you clues about this?

**Q** What do you think of vv 9-11? Why do these verses about riches fall in between verses about trials and tests (v2-4 & 12)?

**Q** What verses can encourage believers today to stay grounded in God’s promises and be humble?

### Read 1 Peter 5:5-7

**Q** What does Peter mean when he says “clothe yourselves with humility?” How do we do this?

**Q** What is the relationship in this passage between humility and anxiety? How can we apply this in our relationships with God and others today?

### Read Matthew 23:11-12

**Q** How is this teaching of Jesus different to what the world teaches?

## Growing Leadership

Questions to help people grow as leaders

**Q** How does humility make someone a more effective leader?

**Q** As leaders, we need to be out in front leading, gathering and growing people. How do we do that *humbly*?

**Q** By contrast, what does a spirit of entitlement look like in a leader? How can we guard against it?

**Q** Jesus taught “the greatest amongst you should be servant of all.” What does *servant leadership* look like?

**Q** What are some practical ways we can strengthen and develop servanthood and humility within our teams and spheres of influence?

**Q** In what ways are you looking for your team to be blessed (individually and collectively)? What role does your humility and servanthood play as you reach toward these?

## Pastoral Care

- We have a pastoral care team at church to walk alongside people through life’s challenges
- With their permission, should anyone in your connect group have experience sickness, death of a loved one, marriage challenges, or surgeries, please contact our church office:  
Sydney 02 8853 5353, Melbourne 03 9720 2099, Brisbane 07 3422 8500, Newcastle 02 4927 1888