

  
CELEBRATING  
20 YEARS OF TLG!

# God's love Knows No Bounds

**TLG Sunday Script 2019/2020**

20-30 minutes as part of the leader's guide.

 Sunday

“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.<sup>2</sup> Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story—those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,<sup>3</sup> those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.<sup>4</sup> Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle.<sup>5</sup> They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away.<sup>6</sup> Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.<sup>7</sup> He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.<sup>8</sup> Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind,<sup>9</sup> for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.<sup>10</sup> Some sat in darkness, in utter darkness, prisoners suffering in iron chains,<sup>11</sup> because they rebelled against God’s commands and despised the plans of the Most High.<sup>12</sup> So he subjected them to bitter labour; they stumbled, and there was no one to help.<sup>13</sup> Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.<sup>14</sup> He brought them out of darkness, the utter darkness, and broke away their chains.<sup>15</sup> Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind,<sup>16</sup> for he breaks down gates of bronze and cuts through bars of iron.”

#### POINT 1: Chains that bind.

If I say the word ‘chains’ to you, what do you think of? What do you visualise? More often than not chains are used to restrict, to contain, to hold down or to hold back. When we speak in spiritual terms chains can mean all the same things.

I want you to picture a child you know and love in your head. Now imagine that child with the heavy chain of hunger hanging over their shoulders, the chain of an angry father draped across them, the chain of illness and worry binding their hands, the chain of mum and dad splitting up across their chest, the restrictive chain of lies people have spoken over them wound tightly round their head. Now can you visualise how heavy those chains can be and how they affect every area of a child’s life? Now can you see why it isn’t fair to expect the same responses, behaviour, achievement and attitude from a child carrying all of that?

Did you know that:

- There are 4.1 million children living in relative poverty in our country.
- 1 in 3 parents from low income families have said that they regularly miss a meal so that their children can eat.
- 1 in 10 children feel unable to cope with the school day.
- Two thirds of children say they worry all the time.

This Sunday we are proclaiming a God who’s love knows no bounds and we are praising him for his son Jesus who sets us free.

## POINT 2: The journey of the Israelites.

In the Bible there are countless stories that feature chains! Whether physically, spiritually or metaphorically, the hinderance of chains comes up time and time again and we get to see so clearly how God responds to that and what His heart reveals.

In Exodus chapter one the nation of Israel is enslaved to the Egyptians. The Israelites didn't choose these chains, they didn't do anything that deserved that level of oppression and yet they were subject to a life where they were weighed down and restricted.

For a generation of children growing up in our country today it is all they know to feel weighed down, restricted and bound by the chains of circumstances they didn't choose or situations they can't cope with. More often than not there is no awareness that life can be different and no awareness of a God who is loving enough to set them free.

Could it be that what we see as 'bad-behaviour' in children is actually just a strained communication method for a young person so weighed down and struggling?

- There have been 422,910 exclusions of children in the UK this past year.
- Every day 45 children are excluded from Nursery, Reception and Year 1.

I wonder if God is breaking your heart for these children in our country this morning? What are you going to do when you connect with God's heart on this today?

## POINT 3: The Father's heart.

So, how does a God whose love knows no bounds respond to all of that? Well as we read through the story of Exodus from chapter 7 we see one of the most powerful displays of who God is and how much He loves His children. The story of the exodus is God showing up in all His power and delivering the Israelites as they call on his name. He physically, spiritually and emotionally breaks the chains that hold them back and he sets them free.

In Hosea 11 v 1-4 God says:

"When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.... 3 It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them.4 I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love...."

We believe God has a father heart and His love knows no bounds for these kids: He is desperate to break their chains and set them free. Do you believe He can do it? Do you want to join in with the remarkable work He's doing around the country?

## THE TLG STORY:

Only in Jesus do we have someone who has defeated every oppression that has ever existed. Only Jesus is desperate to take the weight of these hinderances off us. Only Jesus gave his life so we can be welcomed into the Kingdom chain free. Thank God for Jesus who breaks down gates of bronze and cuts down bars of iron.

The TLG journey began with one struggling weighed down teenager called Lewis. Under the chain of an angry home life Lewis struggled to cope and had been excluded from school time and time again. When Lewis started coming along to the local church youth group the youth leaders knew they had to do more to support Lewis and so TLG was born. Fast forward 20 years and God has raised up over 220 churches across the country to reach out to struggling children and families through one of TLG's 3 programmes.

Everything TLG does is to equip local church to bring a hope and a future to the lives of struggling children.

Our 13 Education Centres put local church at the centre of the lives of teenagers who are at crisis point, struggling under the weight of their chains.

Our Early Intervention programme is designed to put a church volunteer alongside a struggling primary school child for an hour each week. For that hour, the burden of those chains will be supported and shared. Today there are over 100 churches running Early Intervention, from Cornwall to Inverness, supporting over 500 struggling children each year.

Last year we added Make Lunch to our programmes which has been created to equip churches to lift off the chain of hunger and feed the 1 in 5 children facing food insecurity in this country. Praise God that we can now say that over the last 20 years with the local UK church we have supported over 10,000 struggling children.

## SHAUNA'S STORY

Let's take a look at the story of a teenage girl weighed down by bereavement and unforgiveness. It has been remarkable to see the transformational impact the local church has had here. Let's take a look at Shauna's story now.

## INSPIRING YOUR CHURCH TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Knowing that there are thousands of children and families facing crisis in their lives, TLG are passionate and committed about reaching many more as quickly as we can. I want to take a few minutes to ask you to stand with us as we seek to extend our reach so more struggling children can be supported: children just like Shauna.

Our vision is to enable churches to be the light in the darkness, to be there for these struggling children. This vision is big because the need is big and is only getting bigger! We want to ensure that every child who needs help, receives that help, and we want to see local churches begin to experience ripples of transformation for generations to come. By 2025 TLG want to be supporting 10,000 children every single year through partnership with the local church in this country.

You will find under your seats your donation envelope and your opportunity to help us reach more children.

Please would you simply fill out the initial contact information to keep hearing about what God is doing through TLG and access more of our incredible stories of transformation. By handing that in this morning you will be sent a free copy of the TLG story 'Out of the Ordinary' as a thank you; written by our Chief Exec Tim Morfin. So, do fill those in today and hand them to ..... at the end of the service, who will post back to TLG altogether. You will then receive your free copy of the book in the post a couple of weeks later.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to ask you to give a one-off donation this morning as part of the TLG offering. There is an urgent need for more churches to be reaching out to struggling children and their families all around the country, but the reality is for us to provide more help it depends on the generous gifts of many others; and this is something that everyone can do! If like me you know Jesus can break the chains of struggling children, burdened young people, and families facing difficulties all around the country, and you're excited to see that happen then now is your opportunity to stand with us.

We are currently in a phase of seeing more and more individuals choosing to join this incredible vision as God reveals his heart for those children that are struggling. This morning could you give a donation of £15, £50 or £150 to help reach more children. If you have the money on you this morning that's great; if not, don't worry, fill in what you can and indicate the amount you'd like to give, as long as there's a phone number a member of our team will be in touch with to complete the form.

I'll give you a few minutes now to fill in those forms, so you can help us reach more struggling children.

Close. Let's pray to close and ask God to bless our offering.