

GROWING IN THE GROVE

Deep Roots

A 90-Day Guide for Adults Who Are New in Christ



PLEASANT GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

RONDA, NORTH CAROLINA



Deep Roots

A 90-DAY GUIDE FOR ADULTS WHO ARE NEW IN CHRIST

So then, just as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to walk in him, being rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing with gratitude.

Colossians 2:6-7

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Welcome to Deep Roots

Trusting Jesus as your Savior and Lord is the most important decision you will ever make. The Bible says that when you do, God forgives your sin, gives you a new life, and brings you into His family. Whatever brought you here, you are welcome.

This guide will help you put down deep roots over the next 90 days. You will learn what happened when you trusted Christ, and you will build the everyday habits of a growing Christian: reading the Bible, praying, worshiping with a church family, serving, giving, and sharing your faith. Plan on about fifteen minutes a day.

How this guide works

-  **This Week** — Each week starts here: an overview, the memory verse, and questions for when you meet with your pastor or mentor.
-  **Read** — Read the passage in your own Bible first. The key verse printed below it comes from that reading. For more, try the “Go further” reading.
-  **Reflection** — A short reflection on the passage and what it means for your life.
-  **Respond** — A question to answer in writing, or a step to take.
-  **Key Truth** — One truth to hold on to through the day.
-  **Pray** — A short prayer to start your own.
-  **Talk It Over** — Twice a week, a question to bring to your mentor or a Christian friend.
-  **Going Deeper** — A page at the end of each week for further study or reflection.

A few tips

Choose a regular time and place, and keep your Bible, a pen, and this guide together. If you miss a day, pick up where you left off. And don't do this alone: meet with your pastor or a mentor each week.

Walking Through This With Someone

Nobody grows alone. This guide works best when you meet regularly with Pastor James or another mature Christian: a mentor who can answer questions, pray with you, and encourage you. If you are that mentor, thank you. Your time and friendship will matter more than anything on these pages.

How it works

- Each of the 15 weeks begins with a This Week page. Read it first. The When You Meet questions are for your conversation with your pastor or mentor.
- Six daily readings follow, two to a page, about 15 minutes each. Read the passage in your Bible, then the reflection, and write a short response.
- Twice a week, Talk It Over suggests a question to bring to your mentor or a Christian friend.
- Each week ends with a Going Deeper page. At the back you will find memory verse cards, sermon notes, Bible study pages, and a short gospel summary you can use to share your faith.

How you can help

- Meet weekly if you can, even for thirty minutes over coffee.
- Ask open questions and listen. No question is a bad one.
- Pray together, and keep praying between meetings.
- Share your own story, including your struggles.
- Missed days are normal. Help them pick back up without guilt.
- When they are ready, talk with Pastor James about baptism and church membership.

Don't have a mentor yet? Call the church, and we will help you find one. Call the church at (336) 984-3360 or email pastor@pgbcronda.com. We would love to hear from you.

My Story

Write down how your life with Christ began. One day you may want to share it.

My name: _____

I trusted Christ on:

Where I was:

People God used in my life:

I was baptized on: _____

My church: Pleasant Grove Baptist Church

I started this guide on: _____

How I came to trust Christ:

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90-Day Tracker

Check off each reading when you finish it. If you miss a day, do not start over. Just pick up where you left off.

	THIS WEEK	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DEEPER
1 Made New in Christ	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2 Saved and Secure	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3 Getting to Know God	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4 God Has Spoken	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5 Rooted in God's Word	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6 Learning to Pray	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7 Trusting God's Direction	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8 Belonging to God's People	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9 Two Pictures of the Gospel	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10 A Life of Worship	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11 Made to Serve	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12 What the Spirit Grows	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13 When You Stumble	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14 Open Hands	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15 Go Home and Tell	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Made New in Christ

When you trusted Christ, God gave you a new life: you are forgiven, adopted, and never alone.

THIS WEEK

Lifted Out of the Pit

READ FIRST: **Psalm 40:1-3**

Most of us know what it is to be stuck. It might be debt that keeps growing, a habit that won't let go, a grief that won't lift, or a past that seems to follow you everywhere. The harder you pull, the deeper you sink.

David knew that feeling. In Psalm 40 he looks back on a time when he was sinking in a pit of mud and clay, with nothing solid under him. All he could do was cry out to the Lord and wait. And the Lord bent down and listened. He pulled David up, planted his feet on rock, and steadied every step. Then He filled David's mouth with fresh praise, the kind that makes other people notice and start trusting God themselves.

Your story may look different, but the rescue is the same. Sin had us all sinking, and trying harder only took us deeper. Jesus came down into our pit. He carried our sins to the cross, and three days later He walked out of the grave. When you turned from your sin and trusted Him, God pulled you out and set you on a rock that will never give way.

This week looks at what God did when you believed. He gave you a new birth and made you a new creation. He forgave your sins, adopted you into His family, and sent His Holy Spirit to live in you. And He promised to finish what He started. New does not mean perfect, and it does not mean easy. It means God is at work, and He does not quit.

Put It Into Practice

Tell one person you trust that you have put your faith in Jesus. Keep it simple: what your life was like, how you came to trust Him, and what is starting to change. Your story doesn't need to be dramatic to be worth telling.

Memory Verse

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Your friend is just beginning to learn what happened when they trusted Christ. Ask to hear their story, and listen more than you talk. Watch for shame about the past or doubt that God could really change them, and point them to what Christ has done.

When You Meet

- 1 Psalm 40 describes a pit of mud and clay. What has God already begun to lift you out of?
- 2 How did you come to trust Jesus? Tell the story in your own words, then ask your mentor to tell theirs.
- 3 Which truth from this week is hardest for you to believe about yourself: forgiven, adopted, or made new? Why?

Prayer

Lord, You heard me and lifted me out of the pit. Thank You for new life in Jesus and a place in Your family. Keep my feet on the rock, and teach me to walk with You. Amen.

DAY 1

A Birth Only God Can Give

Read: John 3:1-8 Go further: John 1:12-13

Jesus replied, “Truly I tell you, unless someone is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3

Nicodemus had done everything a religious man was supposed to do. He was a Pharisee, part of a strict group that studied God’s law and worked hard to keep it. He visited Jesus after dark and opened with respectful words, but Jesus went straight to his deepest need. Nicodemus didn’t need to try harder. He needed a new beginning that only God’s Spirit could give. Maybe, like Nicodemus, you spent years trying to be good enough. Maybe you never gave God a thought. Either way, the need is the same, and so is the gift. Like the wind, the Spirit works unseen, but His work shows.

RESPOND *Where have you noticed the Spirit at work in you so far? What questions do you still have?*

KEY TRUTH

My new birth is God’s work, not my own effort.

PRAY: God, I could never have made myself new. Thank You for the new birth only Your Spirit can give. Teach me to live as Your child. Amen.

DAY 2

Not Patched Up, Made New

Read: 2 Corinthians 5:17 Go further: Ezekiel 36:26-27

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!
2 Corinthians 5:17

Paul wrote these words to a church full of people with messy pasts. To be in Christ means you are joined to Him by faith, and that changes who you are. God doesn’t just patch up your old life or help you turn over a new leaf. He makes something new: a heart that wants Him, as He promised through Ezekiel long before. Old habits may still pull at you, and some people may still see the person you used to be. That doesn’t cancel what God has done. Your past is no longer the truest thing about you. Being in Christ is.

RESPOND *What old patterns still pull at you? What would you like God to grow in their place?*

Old patterns	What God is growing instead

KEY TRUTH

In Christ, I’m not a patched-up version of my old self. I’m new.

PRAY: Lord, You have made me new in Christ. When old habits pull at me, give me strength to live as the person You say I am. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor or a Christian friend: What changed first after you trusted Christ, and what took longer?

DAY 3

A Debt Wiped Clean

Read: Psalm 103:8-12 Go further: Micah 7:18-19

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. Psalm 103:12

Some people believe God forgives sin in general but quietly doubt He has forgiven that one thing. David knew better. He calls the Lord compassionate and gracious, which means kind to people who don't deserve it. God is slow to anger and full of faithful love. He does not keep accusing, and He has not paid us back for what our sins deserve. Jesus paid that debt on the cross. Forgiveness may not erase every consequence of the past, but it settles your account with God for good. When old guilt comes back, answer it with what God has said.

RESPOND *When old guilt returns, what will you say back to it from this psalm?*

KEY TRUTH

Jesus paid my debt in full. God does not hold it against me.

PRAY: Compassionate God, thank You for not treating me as my sins deserve. When guilt returns, remind me that Jesus paid it all and You have removed it. Amen.

DAY 4

Adopted into God's Family

Read: Romans 8:14-17 Go further: Galatians 4:4-7

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Instead, you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father!" Romans 8:15

Paul describes two ways to relate to God. A slave lives in fear, always wondering if he has done enough. A child belongs. God did not take you in on probation, as a hired hand earning his keep. He adopted you. His Spirit assures you deep inside that you are God's child and an heir, sharing with Christ in all God has promised. That doesn't mean life will be easy; Paul is honest that suffering comes before glory. But you will never face it as an orphan. If the word father stirs up pain for you, know this: God is the Father who never walks away.

RESPOND *Finish this sentence three ways: Because I am God's child, I no longer have to...*

1.

2.

3.

KEY TRUTH

God didn't hire me. He adopted me as His child and heir.

PRAY: Father, I don't have to earn my place in Your family. You adopted me. Teach me to come to You with the trust of a loved child. Amen.

DAY 5

The Counselor Who Stays

Read: John 14:15-18 Go further: John 14:26

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever. John 14:16

Jesus said this over supper, just hours before His arrest, to friends who were afraid of losing Him. He promised they would not be left alone. The Father would send the Holy Spirit. The word translated Counselor means someone called alongside to help. The Spirit is not a force or a feeling. He is God, and He lives in every believer, not just the especially spiritual ones. He helps you understand God's Word, brings Jesus' words back to mind, and gives you strength to obey. Maybe you're the only Christian at home or at work. Even there, you are not alone.

RESPOND Where will you need the Spirit's help this week? Check all that apply, and add your own.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ A hard conversation | ☐ A temptation I can see coming |
| ☐ Feeling lonely | ☐ Understanding the Bible |
| ☐ Stress at work or with money | ☐ A decision I need to make |
| ☐ _____ | |

KEY TRUTH

God's own Spirit lives in me, so I never face anything alone.

PRAY: Father, thank You that Your Spirit is with me always. Make me quick to listen when He teaches, reminds, and warns me today. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: How have you noticed the Holy Spirit helping you? What does that look like on an ordinary day?

DAY 6

God Finishes What He Starts

Read: Philippians 1:3-6 Go further: Colossians 2:6-7

I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. Philippians 1:6

Paul wrote this letter from prison, yet it overflows with thanks. He remembered the day the Philippians first believed the gospel, the good news that Jesus died for our sins and rose again. They had stood with him ever since, and he prayed for them with joy. His confidence was not in their strength but in God's faithfulness. That matters on the days you feel you're getting nowhere. A young tree can look the same for weeks while its roots quietly go deeper. Growth is God's work. Keep showing up, keep coming back to Christ, and trust Him with the pace.

RESPOND What do you hope God will grow in you by the end of this guide?

KEY TRUTH

I'm God's unfinished work, and He never quits halfway.

PRAY: Faithful God, You began this work in me, and You will see it through. On slow days, remind me You haven't stopped. Keep my roots growing deep in Christ. Amen.

Your First Steps

New life starts small, like a seed in the ground. Here are some simple first steps many new Christians take. You don't need to finish them this week. Check them off as you go, and bring your questions to your mentor or Pastor James.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Tell someone you trust that you have put your faith in Jesus. | ☐ Get a Bible you can understand. Ask the church if you need one. |
| ☐ Ask a mature Christian to meet with you regularly as a mentor. | ☐ Worship with your church family on Sunday at 11:00 AM. |
| ☐ Visit a Sunday School class at 9:45 AM. | ☐ Try Wednesday night Bible study at 6:00 PM. |
| ☐ Save the church's phone number in your contacts. | ☐ Read this guide each day, even when you only have a few minutes. |
| ☐ Pray every day, even if it's just a few honest sentences. | ☐ Learn this week's memory verse, 2 Corinthians 5:17. |
| ☐ Write down how you came to trust Christ while it's fresh. | ☐ Talk with Pastor James about baptism and church membership. |

My notes

- i** Baptism comes after faith. It doesn't save you; it pictures Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, and your new life in Him.

Saved and Secure

Your salvation rests on God's grace, not your performance, and nothing can take it from you.

THIS WEEK

A Gift You Could Never Earn

READ FIRST: **Ephesians 2:4-10**

Most of us have learned to be suspicious of anything labeled free. The free vacation comes with a sales pitch. The free trial turns into a monthly bill. So when we hear that salvation is God's free gift, we start looking for the catch.

Paul says there is no catch. In Ephesians 2 he reminds believers what they were before Christ: spiritually dead in their sins, unable to help themselves. But God, who is rich in mercy, made them alive with Christ. Mercy means God does not give us the punishment we deserve. Grace means He gives us kindness we could never earn. Salvation, Paul says, comes by grace through faith: simply trusting what Jesus has done. It is God's gift, not a reward for good works, so no one can brag about it.

Here is the good news hidden in that: if good works could not earn your salvation, bad days cannot cancel it. It never depended on your performance. Paul does go on to say that we are God's handiwork, created for good works. But notice the order. Good works are the fruit of salvation, not the root of it. They grow out of a life God has already made new.

This week you will look at that gift from several sides. You'll see that Jesus holds on to His people, that nothing can separate you from God's love, and that God wants you to be sure you have eternal life. You'll also see what to do when your feelings don't cooperate. If you have ever wondered whether your salvation really took, this week is for you.

Put It Into Practice

Copy Ephesians 2:8-9 onto a card and keep it where you will see it often: your wallet, the kitchen counter, or the bathroom mirror. Each time doubt or guilt shows up this week, read it slowly and let it answer the doubt.

Memory Verse

I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand.

John 10:28

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Doubts about salvation are common early on, especially after a rough week or a fresh failure. Listen for whether their confidence rests on Christ or on their own performance, and share your own seasons of doubt. If they aren't sure they have ever trusted Christ, involve Pastor James.

When You Meet

- 1 When you first heard that salvation is a free gift, did you look for the catch? What made grace hard to accept?
- 2 What tends to shake your confidence that you belong to God: a bad day, a sin, a feeling, or something else?
- 3 Good works are the fruit of salvation, not the root. How does that change the way you think about obeying God?

Prayer

God, I could never save myself, and You never asked me to. Thank You for Your grace in Jesus. When doubt comes, help me rest in what He has done, not in how I'm doing. Amen.

DAY 1

Saved by His Kindness

Read: Titus 3:4-7 Go further: Romans 6:23

...he saved us—not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy—through the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. Titus 3:5

Most of life runs on earning. You work, and you get paid. You perform, and you get reviewed. It's natural to assume God works the same way, keeping score and paying out what we deserve. Paul tells Titus otherwise. Salvation started with God, when His kindness and love appeared in Jesus. God poured out His Spirit generously. He justified us, which means He declared us not guilty and right with Him because of Jesus. And He made us heirs with a sure hope of eternal life. A paycheck is earned. A gift can only be received.

RESPOND *Do you still feel you must earn God's acceptance somehow? What does this passage say to that?*

KEY TRUTH

Salvation is a gift to receive, not a wage to earn.

PRAY: God my Savior, thank You that Your kindness came looking for me. Help me stop trying to earn what You have freely given. I receive it with thanks. Amen.

DAY 2

The Shepherd Holds On

Read: John 10:27-30 Go further: Psalm 121:1-8

My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

John 10:29

Anyone who has kept sheep will tell you they are not strong, fast, or especially smart. They wander. Their safety has never depended on them; it depends on the shepherd. Jesus describes His followers the same way. They know His voice and follow Him, and He knows each one. Then He makes a promise about who is holding whom. Your security doesn't rest on the strength of your grip on Jesus. It rests on His grip on you, and on the Father's, who is greater than all. You may wander at times, but you will not slip through His fingers.

RESPOND *Write down any fears about your place with God, and what Jesus promises in answer.*

What I fear	What Jesus promises

KEY TRUTH

My security rests on Jesus' grip on me, not my grip on Him.

PRAY: Good Shepherd, thank You for knowing me and holding me. When I feel weak, remind me that my safety depends on You. Help me hear Your voice and follow. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: Have you ever feared you could lose your salvation? What helped you rest in Jesus' promise?

DAY 3

Love That Won't Let Go

Read: Romans 8:38-39 Go further: Romans 8:31-37

...nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:39

Paul didn't write this from an easy chair. He had been beaten, shipwrecked, jailed, and left for dead, and still he was persuaded. Then he runs through everything that might come between us and God. Death and life. Angels and spiritual powers. Today and every tomorrow. Anything above us or below us. And to close every loophole, he adds any other created thing. Your fears fit somewhere on that list: a diagnosis, a divorce, a relapse, a layoff, the grave. So does your own worst day. None of it can cut you off from God's love in Christ Jesus.

RESPOND List what you fear could come between you and God. Then read verse 39 aloud over your list.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |

KEY TRUTH

Not even my worst day can pull me out of God's love.

PRAY: Father, I'm tempted to fear so many things. Thank You that none of them can separate me from Your love in Christ. Hold me fast today. Amen.

DAY 4

Written So You Would Know

Read: 1 John 5:11-13 Go further: John 5:24

I have written these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 1 John 5:13

John wrote this letter to Christians who had been shaken. Some teachers had walked away from the church, leaving believers unsure whether their faith was real. John pointed them back to God's own testimony: eternal life is found in His Son. Eternal life isn't only endless time. It is life with God, and it begins the moment you trust Christ. The question isn't whether you feel saved or have been good enough. It's whether you have the Son. If you are trusting Jesus, God says you have life. If you're unsure whether you have ever trusted Him, talk with your mentor or Pastor James this week.

RESPOND How do you know you have eternal life? Answer in your own words, as if a friend had asked.

KEY TRUTH

God wants me to be sure: whoever has the Son has life.

PRAY: God, You don't want me guessing about eternal life. When I doubt, turn my eyes back to Jesus and to what You have promised. Amen.

DAY 5

When God Feels Far Away

Read: Psalm 13:1-6 Go further: Lamentations 3:22-23

But I have trusted in your faithful love; my heart will rejoice in your deliverance. Psalm 13:5

Four times in two verses David asks how long. He feels forgotten, anxious every day, and worn down by an enemy. He loved God deeply, and he isn't pretending. The Bible gives you permission to be honest with God. Then notice what David does. Nothing around him has changed yet, but he chooses to lean on God's faithful love, and by the end he is singing. Your feelings will rise and fall, especially in a new faith. A flat or heavy week doesn't mean God has left. If a dark season lingers, don't carry it alone. Tell your mentor, Pastor James, or your doctor.

RESPOND Write a short, honest prayer like David's: tell God what is hard, ask for help, and name what you will trust.

KEY TRUTH

My feelings rise and fall, but God's faithful love holds steady.

PRAY: Lord, You know how I really feel today. Thank You that I can be honest with You. Help me trust Your faithful love even when I can't feel it. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask a Christian friend: What do you do when God feels far away? What has helped you hold on?

DAY 6

God's Seal and Down Payment

Read: Ephesians 1:13-14 Go further: 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed. Ephesians 1:13

In Paul's world, a valuable letter or shipment was closed with hot wax and stamped with its owner's signet ring. That mark said two things: this belongs to me, and hands off. Paul says God has marked you the same way, and His seal is the Holy Spirit. Then he changes the picture. The Spirit is also a down payment. You may know how that works: real money now, as a promise that the rest is coming. The Spirit's presence in you today is God's guarantee of everything He has promised His children. God never backs out on His word.

RESPOND Look back over this week. Which promise do you most need to hold on to right now, and why?

KEY TRUTH

The Spirit in me is God's seal and His promise of more to come.

PRAY: Father, You have marked me as Your own. Your Spirit in me is Your pledge of all that lies ahead. Let my life today show whose I am. Amen.

Honest Questions About Assurance

Almost every new Christian wonders at some point whether their salvation is real. Assurance means being confident that you truly belong to God, and He wants you to have it. Here are answers to five questions people often ask. Look up the verses, and bring any other questions to your mentor or Pastor James.

— What if I don't feel saved?

Feelings are real, but they are not the foundation. Some days you will feel close to God and some days you won't, just like David in Psalm 13. Your salvation stands on Christ's finished work and God's promise, not on your mood (1 John 5:11-13). Over time you will also notice signs of new life: new desires, a tender conscience, and a growing love for God's people.

— What if I sin again?

You will. Every Christian still struggles with sin. Sin still matters: it hurts you and others, and it grieves God. But it does not undo your adoption. When you sin, don't hide from God. Confess it, which means agreeing with God that it was wrong, turn from it, and receive His forgiveness (1 John 1:9). Jesus Himself speaks to the Father on your behalf (1 John 2:1).

— What if I prayed the wrong words?

You are not saved by saying a prayer perfectly. You are saved by trusting Jesus, and a prayer is simply one way of telling God that you are trusting Him. The real question is not whether you said it right back then, but whether you are trusting Christ now. If you are, rest in His promise to receive everyone who comes to Him (John 6:37).

— Could I lose my salvation?

No. Jesus said no one can snatch His sheep out of His hand or His Father's (John 10:28-29). God finishes the work He starts (Philippians 1:6), and He is able to protect you from stumbling (Jude 24). A true believer may wander for a time and need to be brought back, but God does not let go of His children.

— Not sure you've ever trusted Christ?

Then don't wait. Tell God you are turning from your sin and trusting Jesus alone to save you. Then talk with your mentor or Pastor James this week. They would be glad to sit down with you.

Getting to Know God

God is great, holy, and full of love, and He invites you to know Him personally.

THIS WEEK

Searched and Known

READ FIRST: **Psalm 139:1-12**

Most of us manage what people know about us. We show our best side to the world. A few close friends may know more. But nobody sees everything: the thoughts we'd never say out loud, the memories we'd rather forget, the worries that keep us up at night.

In Psalm 139, David is amazed that God sees it all. God knows when he sits down and when he gets up. He understands David's thoughts from far away and knows his words before he speaks them. Then David tries to imagine a place beyond God's reach and can't find one. Not the heights of heaven. Not Sheol, the realm of the dead. Not the farthest horizon. Even darkness can't hide him, because to God the night is as bright as day.

That kind of knowing can feel more frightening than comforting. If God sees everything, He sees the worst of us. But here is the wonder of the gospel: the God who knows you best is the God who sent His Son for you. He knows you completely and loves you still. You don't have to hide anything from Him. He already knows, and He has not turned away.

This week you'll get to know the God who knows you. You'll see Him as the Creator whose glory fills the sky, the holy King on His throne, the God who is everywhere at once, the One who counts the stars and heals broken hearts, and the God who is love. You'll end the week with one of the deepest truths in the Bible: one God in three persons.

Put It Into Practice

Each evening this week, jot down one thing from the day that showed you what God is like: a sunrise, an answered prayer, a kindness, a verse. At the end of the week, read your list aloud to God as a prayer of praise.

Memory Verse

*Acknowledge that the LORD is God.
He made us, and we are his—his
people, the sheep of his pasture.*

Psalm 100:3

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

This week explores what God is like, ending with the Trinity. Skip comparisons like water, ice, and steam; each one teaches something false. It's fine to say the truth is bigger than our minds. Listen for any fear of being fully known. God knows your friend completely and loves them still.

When You Meet

- 1 Does it comfort you or unsettle you that God sees every thought and memory you have? Why?
- 2 Where in your life right now would it help most to remember that you can't go anywhere God isn't?
- 3 How has your picture of God changed since you began reading the Bible? What surprised you most?

Prayer

Lord, You know me completely, and still You love me. Wherever I go, You are already there. Open my eyes this week to see who You really are. Amen.

DAY 1

A Sermon Without Words

Read: Psalm 19:1-4 Go further: Romans 1:19-20

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the expanse proclaims the work of his hands. Psalm 19:1

David noticed that the sky preaches without making a sound. Day and night, in every corner of the earth, it gets its message across. That message is God's glory, the greatness and beauty of who He is. A sunrise over the Blue Ridge, a summer storm rolling across the fields, a clear night full of stars all say that Someone made this and He is magnificent. Creation can't tell you how to be forgiven. For that, God gave His Word and sent His Son. But it can remind you every day who made you and who is in charge.

RESPOND *When have you sensed God's greatness in creation? What did it make you want to say to Him?*

KEY TRUTH

Every sunrise and every star tells me how great God is.

PRAY: Creator God, the sky tells of Your glory every day. Slow me down to notice Your handiwork, and turn my heart to praise You. Amen.

DAY 2

Undone Before a Holy God

Read: Isaiah 6:1-8 Go further: Revelation 4:8

And one called to another: Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Armies; his glory fills the whole earth. Isaiah 6:3

King Uzziah had ruled for over fifty years, and his death left the nation uneasy. That year, Isaiah saw the true King, still on His throne. Holy means He is in a category all His own, utterly pure. Most of us measure ourselves against other people and come out looking fine. Isaiah saw God and stopped comparing. He saw his own sin and knew he was ruined. Then God did what Isaiah couldn't. A burning coal touched his lips, and his sin was atoned for, paid for and taken away. Only then did God ask, "Who will go for us?" Forgiven people make willing servants.

RESPOND *Isaiah saw God's holiness, his own sin, and God's cleansing. Which do you most need to see clearly right now? Why?*

KEY TRUTH

The holy God makes sinners clean and sends them out.

PRAY: Holy God, You are pure and perfect, and I am not. Thank You for cleansing me through Jesus. Here I am. Use me however You choose. Amen.

DAY 3

A God Both Near and Far

Read: Jeremiah 23:23-24 Go further: Acts 17:24-28

*“Can a person hide in secret places where I cannot see him?”—the LORD’s declaration. “Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?”—the LORD’s declaration. **Jeremiah 23:24***

In Jeremiah’s day, some prophets claimed to speak for God while living as if He could not see them. God’s answer is sobering. He is not a local god who stays in one building or one town and can be kept at a distance. He fills heaven and earth. For someone trying to hide, that is frightening news. For His children, it is a deep comfort. God is with you in the hospital waiting room at three in the morning, on the long drive to work, in the empty house after a loss. You can’t hide from Him, and you never have to.

RESPOND *Where do you most need God’s presence right now? Is there anywhere you’ve been trying to hide from Him?*

KEY TRUTH

I can’t hide from God, and I never have to. He is here.

PRAY: Lord, You fill heaven and earth. Forgive me for the times I’ve tried to hide from You. Thank You that I am never out of Your sight or beyond Your care. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: When has God’s presence meant the most to you? When has it been hardest to sense?

DAY 4

Great Enough, Near Enough

Read: Psalm 147:1-5 Go further: Isaiah 40:26-31

*He counts the number of the stars; he gives names to all of them. Our Lord is great, vast in power; his understanding is infinite. **Psalm 147:4-5***

This psalm was probably sung after God brought His people home from exile, when Jerusalem lay in ruins and many hearts were broken. The Lord rebuilds a city and gathers scattered people. He tends the brokenhearted like a nurse wrapping a wound. Then the psalm lifts its eyes to the stars. The God who runs the universe is the same God who notices your grief. He is great enough to handle anything and near enough to care about everything. That doesn’t mean every wound heals overnight. It means you can bring every one of them to Him.

RESPOND *What hurt or worry have you assumed was too big, or too small, to bring to God? Bring it to Him now.*

KEY TRUTH

The God who counts the stars cares about my broken heart.

PRAY: Great God, You hold the stars in place and still see my wounds. I bring You my hurts and worries today. Heal what only You can heal. Amen.

DAY 5

What Love Really Is

Read: 1 John 4:7-10 Go further: Romans 5:6-8

God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his one and only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 1 John 4:9

We use the word love for everything from biscuits to grandchildren. John says simply, "God is love," and then shows what that looks like. Love is not first our love for God. It is His love for us, shown when He sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. That means Jesus took the punishment we deserved and made peace between us and God. Real love moves first and pays the cost. If people have loved you with conditions, or not at all, this is a different kind of love. And it spreads. Those who have received it begin to love others.

RESPOND Love moves first. Who could you love this week, and how?

Someone who needs love	One way I'll show it

KEY TRUTH

God loved me first and proved it at the cross.

PRAY: Father, You loved me before I ever looked for You, and Jesus paid for my sins. Let that love spill over onto the people I meet today. Amen.

DAY 6

One God: Father, Son, and Spirit

Read: Ephesians 4:4-6 Go further: Matthew 3:16-17

There is one body and one Spirit... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4:4-6

Paul grounds the church's unity in God Himself: one Spirit, one Lord, one God and Father. Scripture insists that God is one, yet it presents the Father, the Son, and the Spirit each as fully God. Christians call this the Trinity: one God in three persons, not three gods. No comparison fits, and that's no surprise; God is greater than our minds. And you already know Him this way: the Father adopted you, the Son saved you, the Spirit lives in you.

RESPOND Looking back over the last two weeks, fill in each blank.

1. The Father _____ me into His family.
2. The Son _____ His life to pay for my sins.
3. The Holy Spirit _____ in every believer.
4. Yet there is only _____ God.

KEY TRUTH

I worship one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

PRAY: God, You are greater than my mind can hold. Thank You for making Yourself known as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: What questions about the Trinity did you have as a new believer?

Eight Truths About God

The Bible tells us a great deal about who God is. Here are eight truths to start with. Look up each passage, then use the lines to note why that truth matters to you now, or where you need it this week.

Creator

Genesis 1:1

Everything that exists, from galaxies to atoms, was made by God. That includes you, and it means you belong to Him.

Holy

Isaiah 6:1-7

God is utterly pure, without a trace of sin, and in a class by Himself. Only He can make sinners clean.

Present Everywhere

Psalms 139:7-10

You can't outrun God or wander beyond His care. Wherever you are, from a hospital room to the far side of the world, He is there.

All-Knowing

Psalms 147:5

Nothing is hidden from God: not the past, not the future, not your private thoughts. Nothing ever takes Him by surprise.

All-Powerful

Jeremiah 32:17

God can do anything He chooses. The One who made the heavens and the earth is never out of options.

Love

1 John 4:9-10

Love is not a mood God has; it is His nature. The cross proves it: He gave His Son for people who didn't love Him.

Faithful

Lamentations 3:22-23

God has never broken a promise and never will. His mercy doesn't run dry; each morning brings a fresh supply.

Unchanging

Malachi 3:6

Moods shift and people change, but God does not. His character, His promises, and His love for you stay the same forever.

God Has Spoken

The Bible is God speaking: every word true, pointing you to Jesus and showing you how to live.

THIS WEEK

Worth More Than Gold

READ FIRST: **Psalm 19:7-11**

In many homes around here, a big family Bible sits on a shelf or a coffee table. Births, marriages, and deaths are written inside. It is dusted, treasured, and handed down. But it is rarely opened. It is possible to honor the Bible and still never hear what God is saying in it.

Last week you saw how Psalm 19 begins with the sky declaring God's glory. Then David turns to another way God speaks: His Word. He calls it perfect and trustworthy, right and pure. It renews your life, makes the inexperienced wise, brings joy to the heart, and makes the eyes light up. David says it is more desirable than a pile of pure gold and sweeter than honey straight from the comb. It warns us, and keeping it brings great reward.

That is because the Bible is not merely a book about God. It is God speaking. The same God who spoke the world into being speaks to you through its pages. In it you meet Jesus. It will comfort you, correct you, and sometimes confront you. It is the one book that never needs updating, and the one you will never outgrow.

This week looks at what the Bible is and why you can trust it. You'll see that it is breathed out by God, true in every word, and centered on Jesus. You'll see why believers come to love it, how it reaches the heart, and how to check what you hear against it. You don't need to be a scholar to read the Bible. You just need to open it.

Put It Into Practice

Keep your Bible where you will see it every day, not on a high shelf. This week, read all of Psalm 19 once a day, and underline one line that stands out each time. Share your favorite with your mentor.

Memory Verse

All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Many adults feel lost in the Bible at first and are embarrassed to say so. Check that your friend has a Bible they can understand, and show them how to use the table of contents. Then read a short passage together and talk about what you notice.

When You Meet

- 1 Before you trusted Christ, what was your experience with the Bible? What did you think it was about?
- 2 What makes reading the Bible hard for you right now: time, understanding, finding passages, or something else?
- 3 David says God's Word renews life. Have you seen it change someone, maybe even you? What happened?

Prayer

God, thank You for speaking. Your Word is perfect, trustworthy, and worth more than gold. Give me a hunger to read it, humility to obey it, and joy in knowing You through it. Amen.

DAY 1

Breathed Out by God

Read: 2 Timothy 3:14-17 Go further: 2 Peter 1:20-21

...you know that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to give you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 2 Timothy 3:15

Paul wrote this near the end of his life, from a prison cell, to a younger pastor named Timothy. Timothy had grown up with the Scriptures. Maybe you didn't, and that's all right; the same Word is in your hands now. Paul says all Scripture is inspired by God. That doesn't mean inspiring, like a good speech. It means breathed out by God. He used human writers, yet every word came from Him. Scripture teaches what is true, rebukes what is wrong, corrects your course, and trains you to live God's way. Some of it will sting, but all of it is for your good.

RESPOND *Scripture teaches, rebukes, corrects, and trains. Where might you need each one right now?*

	Where I need this right now
Teaching	
Rebuking	
Correcting	
Training	

KEY TRUTH

The Bible is God-breathed. When I read it, God is speaking to me.

PRAY: God, You have spoken, and I get to hold Your words in my hands. Teach me, correct me, and train me through them, even when it's hard to hear. Amen.

DAY 2

Nothing Needs Adding

Read: Proverbs 30:5-6 Go further: Psalm 12:6

Every word of God is pure; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Proverbs 30:5

The writer of this proverb begins by admitting how little he knows, so he leans on what God has said. Pure here means refined, like silver with every impurity burned away. Nothing false is mixed into God's words. Then comes a warning: don't add to them. People do it all the time. Some popular sayings sound biblical but aren't, like the old line that God helps those who help themselves. Others take a real verse and stretch it to say something it never meant. When you hear a claim about God, ask where the Bible says it. His Word needs nothing added.

RESPOND *What have you heard about God that you're not sure is actually in the Bible? How could you check?*

KEY TRUTH

Every word God speaks is true, and His Word needs nothing added.

PRAY: God, every word You speak is true. Guard me from believing things about You that You never said. Be my shield as I run to You. Amen.

DAY 3

Every Page Points to Jesus

Read: John 5:39-40 Go further: Luke 24:25-27

You pore over the Scriptures because you think you have eternal life in them, and yet they testify about me. John 5:39

The men Jesus was speaking to knew the Scriptures better than almost anyone. They memorized them, debated them, and built their lives around them. Yet they missed the point. The Scriptures were never meant to be the destination. They are a signpost, and the sign points to Jesus. From God's promise of a rescuer in Genesis, to the lambs sacrificed at Passover, to the King promised to David, the Old Testament keeps looking ahead to Him. It is possible to read the Bible for facts or rules and still refuse to come to Christ. Read it to know Him.

RESPOND *Before now, what did you think the Bible was mainly about? How does Jesus' claim change that?*

KEY TRUTH

I read the Bible to find Jesus, not just facts.

PRAY: Jesus, I don't want to read the Bible and miss You. Open my eyes to see You in its pages, and draw me closer to You every day. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: Where in the Old Testament do you see Jesus most clearly? What helped you see Him there?

DAY 4

An Appetite for God's Word

Read: Psalm 119:97-103 Go further: Jeremiah 15:16

How sweet your word is to my taste—sweeter than honey in my mouth. Psalm 119:103

The writer of Psalm 119 can't stop thinking about God's Word. It has made him wiser than his enemies and given him more insight than his teachers, not because he is smarter, but because he obeys what he reads. It has steered him away from evil paths. If that kind of love for Scripture feels far from you right now, don't be discouraged. Appetites grow. Think of an acquired taste like black coffee or buttermilk. You keep coming back, and one day you realize you enjoy it. Ask God to grow that appetite in you, and keep showing up.

RESPOND *Be honest: what is your appetite for the Bible like right now? What might help it grow?*

KEY TRUTH

My appetite for God's Word grows as I keep coming back to it.

PRAY: Lord, I want to love Your Word the way this psalm writer did. Grow my appetite for it, and make Your words sweet to me. Amen.

DAY 5

Sharp Enough to Heal

Read: Hebrews 4:12 Go further: Isaiah 55:10-11

For the word of God is living and effective and sharper than any double-edged sword... Hebrews 4:12

The writer of Hebrews says God's Word does more than inform. It cuts deep, all the way down to the thoughts and intentions of the heart. It doesn't just show us what we did. It shows us why. You may read a verse about anger, pride, or honesty and feel as if it was written about you. That sting is not God trying to shame you. Think of a surgeon's scalpel, which cuts in order to heal. When Scripture exposes something in you, don't close the book. Bring what it shows you to God, and let Him do His work.

RESPOND *Has a verse ever stung because it hit close to home? What might God be showing you?*

KEY TRUTH

God's Word cuts deep in order to heal me, not to shame me.

PRAY: God, Your Word is living and sharp. Search my heart as I read. Show me what needs to change, and give me grace to let You heal it. Amen.

DAY 6

Check It for Yourself

Read: Acts 17:10-12 Go further: 1 Thessalonians 5:21

The people here were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, since they received the word with eagerness and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. Acts 17:11

Paul and Silas had to slip out of Thessalonica at night after their preaching stirred up a riot. In Berea they found a different kind of crowd. The Bereans were eager to hear, but they didn't simply take Paul's word for it, and many of them came to believe. That's a healthy pattern for you, too. Be eager, and be careful. Test what you hear from preachers, friends, and online voices, including this guide, against the Bible. If you're still learning your way around, use the table of contents. There's no shame in it. Everyone starts there.

RESPOND *Practice finding your way around. Look up each verse, and sum it up in a few words.*

Genesis 1:1

Psalms 23:1

John 3:16

Romans 5:8

KEY TRUTH

I can be eager to learn and still check everything by Scripture.

PRAY: Lord, make me eager to hear Your Word and careful to test everything by it. Help me learn my way around the Bible, one page at a time. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: How do you study a passage when you want to go deeper? What tools help you most?

The Bible's Big Story

The Bible holds 66 books, written by about forty authors across some fifteen centuries, yet it tells one story. Here it is in nine scenes. Look up the passages when you have time, and watch how each scene points toward Jesus.



Rooted in God's Word

Your roots grow deep when you read God's Word, reflect on it, remember it, and obey it.

THIS WEEK

Planted by the Water

READ FIRST: **Jeremiah 17:7-8**

Anyone who has kept a garden through a dry August knows the difference between shallow roots and deep ones. Shallow roots need watering every day and still wilt by afternoon. Deep roots reach water you can't see, and the plant stays green when everything around it is parched. Deep roots take time, and they grow out of sight.

Jeremiah uses that picture to describe two kinds of people. One relies on human strength and ends up like a scrub bush in the desert, dry and stunted. The other trusts the Lord and becomes like a tree planted by water, sending its roots out toward the stream. Heat and drought still come to that tree. But it doesn't panic, its foliage doesn't fade, and it goes on producing fruit.

Jeremiah never says the heat won't come. It comes for all of us: a layoff, a diagnosis, a funeral, a long season of loneliness. Following Jesus doesn't exempt you from any of that. What changes is what you draw from. A believer whose roots reach into God can be grieving and still be green, tired and still bearing fruit. That is the life God offers you.

This week is about the habits that carry your roots down to that water. You'll learn to delight in God's Word, make daily time for it, meditate on it, store it in your heart, do what it says, and keep digging when it's hard to understand. It isn't a contest to read the most chapters. It's a matter of returning to the stream, day after day.

Put It Into Practice

Settle on when and where you'll meet with God each day this week, and guard it like an appointment. Keep your Bible, this guide, and a pen there. Before the week ends, try the ROOT study on the Going Deeper page.

Memory Verse

*Your word is a lamp for my feet
and a light on my path.*

Psalm 119:105

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

The ROOT method (Read it, Observe, Own it, Talk to God) appears this week. Walk through it together once on a short passage. Ask what time and place your friend has chosen for daily reading, and follow up gently. The goal is a habit, not a grade.

When You Meet

- 1 What dry season are you in right now, or have you been through recently? Where have you been looking for water?
- 2 What time of day and what place could realistically become your regular time with God? What tends to get in the way?
- 3 Reading, reflecting, memorizing, obeying: which comes easiest for you with God's Word? Which is hardest, and why?

Prayer

Lord, I don't want shallow roots. Draw me back to Your Word every day, and keep me green and fruitful when the heat comes. Amen.

DAY 1

What You Soak In

Read: Psalm 1:1-3 Go further: Psalm 1:4-6

He is like a tree planted beside flowing streams that bears its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. **Psalm 1:3**

Notice the verbs in the psalm's first verse: walk, stand, sit. A person starts by taking a little bad advice, lingers with people headed the wrong way, and ends up settled among the mockers. It happens gradually, through the voices we listen to most. The answer isn't to avoid everyone who doesn't believe; Jesus was a friend to sinners. It's choosing what shapes you. The happy person delights in God's Word and turns it over in his mind day and night. Think about what you soak in each day: news, podcasts, a coworker's cynicism, an old friend's advice. Roots draw from whatever surrounds them.

RESPOND Which voices shape your thinking most each week? How could you make more room for God's Word?

KEY TRUTH

My roots draw from whatever I soak in, so I choose God's Word.

PRAY: Lord, keep me from drifting toward the wrong voices. Give me a real delight in Your Word, and let it shape me more than anything else. Amen.

DAY 2

Woven into Everyday Life

Read: Deuteronomy 6:6-9 Go further: Mark 1:35

Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. **Deuteronomy 6:7**

Moses spoke these words as Israel prepared to enter a new land full of new pressures. God's Word was never meant to stay in a scroll on a shelf. It was to live in their hearts, come up in everyday conversation, and even be written on doorframes and city gates. A life like that usually grows out of a simple habit. Set a daily appointment with God, even a fifteen-minute one, in a spot you can count on. Tie it to something you already do, like your first cup of coffee or your lunch break. Small and steady beats big and rare.

RESPOND Fill in the details of your daily time with God. Be realistic.

Time: _____

Place: _____

Right after I: _____

Likely obstacle: _____

KEY TRUTH

Small, steady time with God each day shapes my whole life.

PRAY: Lord, I don't want Your Word gathering dust on a shelf. Help me make room for You every day, and keep at it when life gets busy. Amen.

DAY 3

Slow Down and Meditate

Read: Joshua 1:8 Go further: Philippians 4:8

This book of instruction must not depart from your mouth; you are to meditate on it day and night...

Joshua 1:8

Joshua had just inherited Moses' job: leading a nation into a land of walled cities and armies. At the center of God's charge to him was not a battle plan. It was His Word. Biblical meditation isn't emptying your mind. It's filling it with Scripture and turning a passage over until it sinks in. This guide uses a simple way to do that called ROOT. Read the passage slowly, more than once. Observe: what happens, and what does it reveal about God? Own it: what does it mean for your life, and what will you do? Then Talk to God about what you found.

RESPOND Read Joshua 1:8 slowly, twice. Which word or phrase stands out to you? Why?

KEY TRUTH

Meditating means filling my mind with God's Word and turning it over.

PRAY: Lord, slow me down. Help me not just read Your Word but think it over until it takes root in me and shapes what I do. Amen.

DAY 4

Stored Up for Later

Read: Psalm 119:9-16 Go further: Matthew 4:1-4

I have treasured your word in my heart so that I may not sin against you. Psalm 119:11

The writer of this psalm knew something practical. When temptation comes, you rarely have a Bible open. What helps is what you have already stored away. Jesus showed this in the wilderness, answering each of the devil's temptations with Scripture He knew by heart. Maybe you think you're too old or too busy to memorize. But you already carry song lyrics, phone numbers, and recipes in your head. You can learn one verse a week. Write it on a card, say it aloud, and review it while you wait in line. Then, in the moment of need, the Spirit can remind you of what you've learned.

RESPOND Which of these will help you learn Psalm 119:105? Check the ones you'll use this week.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Write it on a card and carry it | ☐ Say it aloud three times a day |
| ☐ Make it my phone's lock screen | ☐ Learn it one phrase at a time |
| ☐ Write it from memory each morning | ☐ Say it to someone else |
| ☐ _____ | |

KEY TRUTH

What I store up today, God can bring to mind tomorrow.

PRAY: Lord, I'm not too old or too busy to learn Your Word. Plant it deep in me, and use it to steady me when I'm tempted or afraid. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: Which verse do you know by heart that has helped you most? When did it help?

DAY 5

Don't Walk Away from the Mirror

Read: James 1:22-25 Go further: Luke 6:46-49

But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. James 1:22

Picture glancing in the mirror on your way out, seeing that your collar is crooked and your hair is sticking up, and leaving it that way. According to James, that's what hearing God's Word without doing it looks like. It's possible to go to church, take notes, even read every day, and stay the same. Obeying doesn't earn God's love; you already have it. But the blessing comes in the doing. James calls God's Word the law of freedom, because living it sets you free. After you read, pick one small, concrete step, and take it today.

RESPOND *What has God shown you lately that you haven't acted on yet? What is one step you'll take today?*

KEY TRUTH

The blessing isn't in just hearing God's Word, but in doing it.

PRAY: Lord, I don't want to hear Your Word and walk away unchanged. Show me one step to take today, and give me the courage to take it. Amen.

DAY 6

Worth the Digging

Read: Proverbs 2:1-6 Go further: James 1:5

For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:6

A father in Proverbs urges his son to pursue wisdom the way a prospector pursues silver: listening closely, calling out for insight, searching as if a fortune were buried under his feet. Understanding the Bible takes that kind of persistence. Parts of it read easily. Others, like long family records or ancient laws, may leave you puzzled or even bored. That's normal, and it's no reason to give up. Ask God for wisdom. Read the verses before and after a hard passage. Write your questions down and bring them to your mentor, a Sunday School class, or Wednesday night Bible study.

RESPOND *Write down one question from your reading so far, and plan how you'll dig for the answer.*

My question: _____

Where I found it: _____

Who I'll ask: _____

KEY TRUTH

God gives wisdom to those who keep digging and keep asking.

PRAY: Lord, You are the source of all wisdom. When Your Word is hard to understand, give me the persistence to keep searching and good teachers to help me. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Bring one question from your reading to your mentor. Ask: How would you go about finding the answer?

Practice ROOT: Seeds and Soil

ROOT is a simple way to study any passage: Read it, Observe, Own it, Talk to God. Practice it on a story Jesus told about seeds, soil, and roots in Mark 4:1-20. Set aside twenty unhurried minutes. The goal isn't to finish; it's to meet God in His Word.

— R — Read It

Read Mark 4:1-20 slowly, twice. The first time, just follow the story. The second time, notice details you missed. Jot down anything that stands out.

— O — Observe

What happens to the seed on each kind of ground? What does Jesus say the seed stands for? What do you learn about God and His Word?

— O — Own It

Which kind of ground sounds most like you lately? What worries or wants might be crowding out God's Word? What would help it take deeper root in you this week?

— T — Talk to God

Put your response into a few sentences of prayer. Thank God for His Word, and ask Him to make your heart good soil.

— Keep Going

ROOT works with any passage. Use the Bible study pages at the back of this guide whenever you want to go deeper.

Learning to Pray

Prayer is honest, ongoing conversation with a Father who cares, and Jesus Himself teaches us how.

THIS WEEK

When Prayer Feels Unfamiliar

READ FIRST: **Luke 11:1-4**

Jesus' disciples had watched Him pray. Luke often shows Him praying before big moments, and He regularly withdrew to pray alone, sometimes through the night. These men had prayed all their lives, yet something about the way Jesus prayed made them want more. One day, when He finished, one of them asked, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Jesus answered with a short prayer that begins with one word: Father. Prayer is not reciting the right formula to a distant power. It is a child talking with a Father who loves them. In a few lines, it honors God's name, asks for His kingdom (His reign as King) to come, and asks for daily bread, forgiveness, and protection from temptation. Some Christians pray these exact words. Others use them as a guide for their own.

Many people who come to faith as adults feel self-conscious about prayer. Maybe you have heard others pray with polished words and assumed you could never do that. God is not grading your grammar. Plain words are fine. So are silence, tears, and prayers that trail off halfway through. You can pray in the car, at the kitchen table, on a walk, or lying awake at night. Your Father is listening to every word.

This week you will bring your worries to God, use Jesus' prayer as a pattern, practice thanksgiving, pray for others, keep asking when answers are slow, and build a steady rhythm of prayer. The memory verse sums it up: "Don't worry about anything," but bring every need to God with thanksgiving.

Put It Into Practice

Set aside the same time and place to pray each day this week, even five minutes with your morning coffee or on a walk. Use the prayer journal on this week's Going Deeper page to keep track of what you pray for and how God answers.

Memory Verse

Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Philippians 4:6

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Many new believers feel awkward praying, especially out loud. Ask how prayer is going, and listen for the belief that prayers must sound polished. Pray short, plain prayers together so they hear how simple it can be. Never push anyone to pray aloud before they are ready.

When You Meet

- 1 What has prayer been like for you so far? What makes it feel natural, and what makes it feel awkward?
- 2 The first word of Jesus' prayer is Father. What does that word stir up in you, whether good or painful?
- 3 What worry are you carrying right now that you could bring to God instead? Would you pray about it together?

Prayer

Father, thank You that I can come to You as Your child. Teach me to pray, simply and honestly, and to hand You each worry as it comes. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAY 1

Setting Down the Weight

Read: 1 Peter 5:6-7 Go further: Psalm 55:22

...casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you. 1 Peter 5:7

Peter wrote to Christians who were suffering for their faith, insulted and pressured by their neighbors. His counsel begins with humility: bow low under God's mighty hand, and trust Him to lift you up in His time. Pride insists on carrying everything alone. Humility admits you can't. Worries pile up: a medical test, a past-due bill, a strained relationship, someone you love who is far from God. You were never meant to carry them by yourself. Prayer is where you hand them over, one by one. You may pick some back up by lunchtime. That's all right. Hand them over again.

RESPOND What are you carrying right now? Name each worry, then hand it to God in prayer.

Home or family: _____

Work or money: _____

Health: _____

Someone I love: _____

KEY TRUTH

Prayer is where I set down what I was never meant to carry.

PRAY: Father, I humble myself before You. I'm tired of carrying these worries alone. I hand them to You now, and I trust You to care for me. Amen.

DAY 2

A Pattern for Prayer

Read: Matthew 6:9-13 Go further: Matthew 6:5-8

Therefore, you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, your name be honored as holy. Matthew 6:9

Just before this, Jesus warned against praying to impress people or piling up empty words, as if God could be worn down by volume. Then He gave a model. Notice the order. It begins with God: His name, His kingdom, His will. Only then does it turn to us: bread for today, forgiveness, and protection from temptation and the evil one. Most of us start with our requests. Jesus' pattern reorders the heart. You can pray these exact words, and they are worth memorizing. You can also use each line as a prompt, pausing to put your own life into it.

RESPOND Pray through Jesus' pattern. Write a sentence of your own prayer for each part.

	My prayer, in my own words
God's name and kingdom	
My needs today	
Forgiveness	
Help against temptation	

KEY TRUTH

Jesus' pattern starts with God before it turns to my needs.

PRAY: Our Father in heaven, may Your name be honored and Your will be done in my life today. Give me what I need, forgive my sins, and keep me from temptation. Amen.

DAY 3

A Chorus of Thanks

Read: Psalm 136:1-9 Go further: Psalm 136:10-26

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good. His faithful love endures forever. Psalm 136:1

Psalm 136 was written to be sung, likely with a leader calling out one line and the congregation answering with the other. Every verse ends with the same response about God's faithful love. That phrase translates a Hebrew word for loyal love that keeps its promises. This first section starts with creation: the heavens, the land, the sun by day, and the moon and stars by night. The repetition is the point. Thankful people are not those with easier lives. They are people who have trained themselves to remember. Worry rehearses what might go wrong. Thanksgiving rehearses what God has already done.

RESPOND List five things God has given you or done for you. After each one, stop and thank Him.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 5. _____ | |

KEY TRUTH

Thanksgiving trains my heart to remember what God has already done.

PRAY: Lord, You are good, and Your faithful love never runs out. Thank You for the gifts I rushed past this week. Teach me to notice them and to thank You. Amen.

DAY 4

Praying for Everyone

Read: 1 Timothy 2:1-4 Go further: James 5:13-16

First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone... 1 Timothy 2:1

Paul wrote to Timothy, a young pastor in Ephesus. Among his first instructions: pray for everyone. Intercession means praying on someone else's behalf. Paul names kings and all who hold authority, though the rulers of that day were no friends of the church. So pray beyond the people you like and the leaders you agree with: your boss, your county commissioners, the neighbor who never waves, the relative who grates on you. God "wants everyone to be saved," and prayer is one of the ways He draws people to Himself.

RESPOND Who will you carry to God this week? Name one person for each line, and pray for them daily.

Someone close to me: _____

A leader: _____

Someone hard to love: _____

Someone far from God: _____

KEY TRUTH

Prayer reaches people I could never reach on my own.

PRAY: Father, You want everyone to be saved. I lift up each name I wrote today. Draw them to Yourself, and soften my heart toward those I find hard to love. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor how they pray for someone who has hurt or frustrated them. Then pray together for a name on your list.

DAY 5

When Answers Take Time

Read: Luke 18:1-8 Go further: Luke 11:5-13

Now he told them a parable on the need for them to pray always and not give up. Luke 18:1

Jesus told this parable, a story with a spiritual point, about a crooked judge and a widow who kept coming back, asking for justice. In that culture, a widow often had no money and no one to speak for her. Her persistence worked: the judge gave in just to be rid of her. Jesus' point is not that God has to be nagged into helping. It's the opposite. If even that judge finally acted, how much more will your loving Father respond to His children? Keep praying. His answer may be yes, wait, or no, but He is never careless with your requests.

RESPOND *What have you prayed about for a long time? What tempts you to quit, and what keeps you going?*

KEY TRUTH

God is not a reluctant judge; He is a Father who hears.

PRAY: Father, some things I've prayed about for a long time still feel unanswered. Give me faith to keep asking, and help me trust Your timing and Your wisdom. Amen.

DAY 6

Daniel's Open Window

Read: Daniel 6:6-11 Go further: Daniel 6:16-23

...three times a day he got down on his knees, prayed, and gave thanks to his God, just as he had done before.

Daniel 6:10

Daniel was an old man by now, a senior official in the Persian empire, and his rivals could find nothing to accuse him of except his devotion to God. So they flattered King Darius into signing a law: for thirty days, anyone who prayed to any god or person except the king would be thrown to the lions. Daniel's response was not a protest or a publicity stunt. It was simply what he had always done. The law changed; his habit didn't. What you practice on ordinary days holds you up on the hard ones. Start building yours now.

RESPOND *Pick the moments you'll use for prayer this week, and add any others that fit your day.*

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ When I first wake up | ☐ Before meals |
| ☐ In the car or on a walk | ☐ During a midday break |
| ☐ Before a hard conversation | ☐ When I feel anxious |
| ☐ Before I fall asleep | ☐ _____ |

KEY TRUTH

Prayer habits built on ordinary days hold me up on hard ones.

PRAY: Lord, thank You that I can come to You anytime. Help me build a steady habit of prayer, and give me Daniel's quiet courage when my faith costs me something. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor what their prayer habit looks like on an ordinary day, and what helps them keep it.

Keeping a Prayer Journal

Write down what you are praying for, and leave room to note how God answers. Some answers will be yes, some wait, and some no. Looking back over this page will remind you of His faithfulness and help you keep praying when answers are slow. The prompts below follow Jesus’ pattern.

- Praise: Start with who God is.
- Surrender: Ask for His will, not just yours.
- Ask: Bring your needs and the needs of others.
- Confess: Name your sins and receive His forgiveness.
- Guard: Ask for strength against temptation.

Date	What I’m praying for	How God answered

Trusting God's Direction

God rarely shows us the whole road, but He faithfully leads those who trust Him, one step at a time.

THIS WEEK

The Long Way Around

READ FIRST: **Exodus 13:17-22**

When God brought Israel out of slavery in Egypt, the quickest route to the land He had promised them ran along the coast through Philistine country. God chose another path. He knew His people would lose heart at the first sign of war and head back to Egypt. So He led them on the longer wilderness road toward the Red Sea.

He did not leave them to navigate on their own. The Lord Himself led the way in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, so they could travel in daylight or darkness. And it “never left its place” in front of them. Moses even carried Joseph’s bones with them, because Joseph had believed, centuries earlier, that God would keep His promise and lead His people out.

You may be in a long-way-around season yourself: a recovery that takes longer than you hoped, a job search, a slow rebuild after a hard chapter, a prayer still waiting for an answer. The shortest route is not always God’s route. He knows what you are ready for and what you are not, and He is still going ahead of you.

There is no pillar of cloud over your house today, yet God still guides His people. This week looks at how: through His Word, His Holy Spirit, and wise Christian counsel. It also looks at what happens when we would rather run the other way. The memory verse gives you three handholds: trust the Lord wholeheartedly, “do not rely on your own understanding,” and know Him in everything you do. Straightening the path is His job, not yours.

Put It Into Practice

Write down one decision you are facing, large or small, and work through the questions on this week’s Going Deeper page. Pray about it each day, and talk it over with your mentor or a mature Christian friend before you decide.

Memory Verse

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5-6

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

New believers often want a clear sign for every decision. Help them see that God guides mainly through Scripture, prayer, and wise counsel. If they face a big choice this week, walk through it with them. Ask questions before offering answers, and point them back to the Bible.

When You Meet

- 1 Where in your life right now does it feel like God is taking you the long way around?
- 2 When you have a decision to make, where do you usually turn first? How might that change as you follow Jesus?
- 3 Is there a decision in front of you that you would like help thinking through with Scripture and prayer?

Prayer

Lord, You know the whole road; I see only the next step. Help me trust You with all my heart. Lead me by Your Word and Spirit, and give me grace to follow. In Jesus’ name, amen.

DAY 1

A Shepherd Who Leads

Read: Psalm 23:1-3 Go further: John 10:11-15

He renews my life; he leads me along the right paths for his name's sake. Psalm 23:3

David spent his early years keeping sheep, so he knew their limits. Sheep wander. They spook easily. Left alone, they can't find grass or water. A good shepherd walks ahead, finds pasture and quiet water, and calls the flock to follow. David saw himself as one of those sheep, with the Lord as his shepherd. Notice how personal it is: my shepherd. Because of who was leading him, he could say, "I have what I need." You don't need every answer about the future. You need to stay close to the One who has them.

RESPOND *Where do you feel like a wandering sheep right now? What would staying close to your Shepherd look like?*

KEY TRUTH

Staying close to my Shepherd matters more than seeing the whole road.

PRAY: Lord, You are my shepherd. When I wander or panic, call me back. Lead me today, and help me stay close enough to hear Your voice. Amen.

DAY 2

A Voice Behind You

Read: Isaiah 30:21 Go further: Isaiah 30:15-20

...whenever you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear this command behind you: "This is the way. Walk in it." Isaiah 30:21

Isaiah spoke to people who had stopped asking God for direction. Facing a powerful enemy, they ran to Egypt for help and told the prophets to quit bringing up God's warnings. Even so, God promised to show them mercy and to teach them Himself. How does God guide you today? Mostly through the Bible. As you read it day after day, its words settle in and speak up at the right moment: when you're tempted to cut a corner, about to snap at someone, or unsure what to do next. That is God guiding you.

RESPOND *Think of a choice in front of you. What have you read in the Bible that speaks to it?*

KEY TRUTH

God guides me mainly through His Word, so I keep reading it.

PRAY: Lord, I want to hear Your voice. Plant Your Word deep in me, and when I stand at a crossroads, remind me which way to go. Amen.

DAY 3

Guided into the Truth

Read: John 16:13 Go further: John 16:7-15

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. John 16:13

On the night before the cross, Jesus' disciples were heartbroken that He was leaving. He promised them the Holy Spirit. The Spirit would not bring a new message of His own; He would make known what belongs to Jesus. That promise was first kept as the apostles remembered and taught Jesus' words, which we now have in the New Testament. The same Spirit lives in every believer. He opens your understanding of Scripture, brings it to mind when you need it, and presses on your conscience. Any sense of leading that contradicts God's Word is not from Him.

RESPOND *When have you sensed you should, or shouldn't, do something? How did it line up with the Bible?*

KEY TRUTH

The Spirit never leads me away from the truth He inspired.

PRAY: Holy Spirit, You live in me, and I am grateful. Guide me into the truth, open my understanding of the Bible, and give me courage to obey what I know is right. Amen.

DAY 4

Walking with the Wise

Read: Proverbs 13:20 Go further: Proverbs 15:22

The one who walks with the wise will become wise, but a companion of fools will suffer harm. Proverbs 13:20

Proverbs is a book of short sayings about everyday wisdom, and this one is blunt: you become like the people you walk with. Many of us learned to make decisions alone, or learned from people who didn't have our best interests at heart. God has placed wise believers around you for a reason. Before a big decision, such as a job change, a move, a relationship, or a large purchase, talk it through with someone who knows God and knows you. That's not weakness. It is one of the ordinary ways God guides. And it's worth asking: who am I walking with now?

RESPOND *Who are wise, godly people you could ask for counsel? Star one you'll talk with this week.*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

KEY TRUTH

God often guides me through wise people who love Him.

PRAY: Father, I don't have to figure life out alone. Give me the humility to ask for counsel and the wisdom to choose my companions well. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor about a time wise counsel kept them from a mistake, or when ignoring it cost them.

DAY 5

Running the Other Way

Read: Jonah 1:1-3 Go further: Jonah 3:1-5

Jonah got up to flee to Tarshish from the LORD's presence. Jonah 1:3

God sent Jonah to preach in Nineveh, a great city of Assyria, Israel's brutal enemy. Jonah bought passage on a ship headed the opposite way. Notice the direction: down to Joppa, down into the ship, and eventually down into the sea. Running from God is always a descent. Jonah wasn't confused about what God wanted; he just didn't want to do it. Later he admitted he feared God would show mercy to his enemies. Most of us know what it's like to run from something God has made clear. The good news: God pursued Jonah and gave him a second chance.

RESPOND *Is there something God has made clear that you've been avoiding? What is one step toward it?*

KEY TRUTH

Running from God only takes me down,
but He still calls me back.

PRAY: Lord, You know where I've been running from You. Turn me around. Thank You for second chances. Help me obey You, even when it's hard. Amen.

DAY 6

Guidance for the Road Ahead

Read: Psalm 32:8 Go further: Psalm 32:8-11

I will instruct you and show you the way to go; with my eye on you, I will give counsel. Psalm 32:8

Psalm 32 begins with the relief of being forgiven. David had hidden his sin, and it weighed on him until he confessed it. Then, in verse 8, God Himself speaks. The next verse adds a warning: don't be like a horse or mule that has to be steered with a bit and bridle. God would rather lead you by relationship than by force. That's a comfort when the future is uncertain: a diagnosis, a layoff, a move, a parent who needs more care. You may not know what next year holds, but you are not walking into it unwatched or untaught.

RESPOND *On the left, write what feels uncertain. On the right, write something true about God that speaks to it.*

What feels uncertain	What I know about God

KEY TRUTH

I may not see the road ahead, but God sees
me on it.

PRAY: Lord, You see the road ahead when I can't. Teach me, counsel me, and keep Your eye on me. Make me willing to be led, not dragged. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Share with your mentor something ahead that feels uncertain, and ask them to pray with you about it.

Making a Wise Decision

Some choices are clear because the Bible speaks to them directly. Others are not: which job to take, where to live, how to handle a hard relationship. God doesn't usually hand us a map, but He does give us what we need to choose wisely. Use these questions with the decision you wrote down this week.

— Questions to Ask

- Does the Bible speak to this? If God's Word says no, the question is settled.
- Will this help me love God and love people, or pull me away from both?
- Have I prayed about it honestly, willing to hear God's answer and not just mine?
- What do wise, mature Christians who know me think?
- Am I running toward something good, or away from something God has asked of me?
- Could I do this openly, with a clear conscience before God and my church family?

— When More Than One Choice Honors God

Sometimes both options are good. If you have prayed, searched the Scriptures, and sought counsel, and nothing in God's Word rules either one out, you are free to choose. Trust Him with the outcome. He is able to redirect your steps.

— My Decision

Write the decision you are facing. Then note what you learned from the questions above, and what you sense God leading you to do.

— A Promise to Hold

God gives wisdom generously to anyone who asks, and He never scolds you for asking (James 1:5). Pray before you decide, and keep praying after.

Belonging to God's People

Trusting Christ made you part of His church, a family you need and a family that needs you.

THIS WEEK

What the First Believers Did

READ FIRST: [Acts 2:41-47](#)

On the day the church was born, Peter preached about Jesus to a crowd in Jerusalem, many of them visitors from other nations. About three thousand believed and were baptized. In a single day, people who had been strangers that morning became a family. Luke tells us what they gave themselves to: the apostles' teaching, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer.

The apostles were the men Jesus had personally trained and sent out to teach. Fellowship means a shared life, not just a handshake at the door. These believers ate together in one another's homes "with joyful and sincere hearts," and when someone was in need, others sold what they had to help. Luke sums it up: "Every day the Lord added to their number."

Some people say they can follow Jesus just fine without a church. The New Testament doesn't picture that. Believers belong to each other. Church is not a place to perform; it is a place to belong. Maybe church has hurt you before, or maybe you have never been part of one. Either way, every church is full of imperfect people, because it is made of sinners saved by grace. But you will also find people who will pray for you, bring a meal when you're sick, and grow alongside you.

This week looks at what the church is, why every member matters, how to love one another, and how God provides leaders to care for His people and sends them out with the gospel, the message of what Jesus has done. The memory verse says it plainly: "you are the body of Christ." You are part of it.

Put It Into Practice

This week, invite a church member to join you for a meal or a cup of coffee. It doesn't have to be fancy. Ask how they came to faith, and share a little of your own story. Then start on the checklist on this week's Going Deeper page.

Memory Verse

Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it.

[1 Corinthians 12:27](#)

- ☐ Memorized
- ☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Many adults come to faith carrying church wounds, or with no church experience. Listen for fears about fitting in, being judged, or being asked for money. Introduce them to people by name, sit with them on Sunday, and help them find a class where they can be known.

When You Meet

- 1 What has your experience of church been like before now, good or bad? How does it shape how you feel today?
- 2 Which of the things the first believers gave themselves to comes easiest to you? Which is hardest?
- 3 Who at church could you get to know better? What is one step you could take toward them this week?

Prayer

Father, thank You that I don't have to follow You alone. Thank You for the church family You have given me, flaws and all, mine included. Help me love them and take my place among Your people. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAY 1

Built into Something Bigger

Read: 1 Peter 2:4-5 Go further: Ephesians 2:19-22

...you yourselves, as living stones, a spiritual house, are being built to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 2:5

Peter calls Jesus a living stone, rejected by people but “chosen and honored by God.” Then he says the same of everyone who comes to Jesus. In the Old Testament, God met His people at a temple built of stone. Now He lives among believers themselves. The church, then, is not an address. It is people. A stone lying alone in a field is just a rock. Set into a wall, it holds something up. You may feel unimpressive, or rejected by people whose opinion mattered. Jesus was rejected too, and God built everything on Him.

RESPOND *Where have you been standing alone? What would it look like to be built in with God’s people?*

KEY TRUTH

The church is not a building I visit; it’s a people I belong to.

PRAY: Lord Jesus, You were rejected by people but chosen by God. Thank You for choosing me and setting me among Your people. Make me a stone that helps hold others up. Amen.

DAY 2

Every Part Matters

Read: 1 Corinthians 12:12-20 Go further: 1 Corinthians 12:21-27

But as it is, God has arranged each one of the parts in the body just as he wanted. 1 Corinthians 12:18

The church in Corinth was gifted but divided. Some members thought they were more important than others, and some felt they didn’t matter at all. Paul answered with a picture: the church is a body. Imagine a foot deciding it doesn’t belong because it isn’t a hand, or an ear quitting because it isn’t an eye. Every part is needed, and no part gets to opt out. You don’t have to be the pastor, the song leader, or the one who always knows what to say. God placed you in the body on purpose, and the rest of us are weaker without you.

RESPOND *How might God have made you to serve His church? Check any that fit, and add your own.*

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Helping behind the scenes | ☐ Welcoming new people |
| ☐ Teaching or explaining things | ☐ Encouraging people who are struggling |
| ☐ Praying for others | ☐ Cooking, fixing, or building |
| ☐ Working with children or youth | ☐ _____ |

KEY TRUTH

Christ’s body needs every part, including me.

PRAY: Father, thank You for placing me in Your church on purpose. Keep me from comparing myself with others. Show me my part, and help me do it well. Amen.

DAY 3

Why Showing Up Matters

Read: Hebrews 10:24-25 Go further: Hebrews 3:12-13

...not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching. **Hebrews 10:25**

Hebrews was written to believers who were tired and under pressure, and some were tempted to drift away. The writer urges them to think about one another and how to “provoke love and good works.” Provoke usually means stirring up trouble. Here it means stirring each other up toward good. You can’t do that from a distance. Life hands us plenty of reasons to stay home: a rough week, a long shift, feeling out of place, old church hurts. But every time you walk through those doors, you both receive encouragement and bring it. Someone in that room needs what God is doing in you.

RESPOND *Who has encouraged you in your faith so far? Who could you encourage this week, and how?*

KEY TRUTH

Showing up is one way I love my church family.

PRAY: Lord, I’m grateful for everyone who has encouraged me. Help me keep showing up, and show me someone I can stir up toward love and good works this week. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor what keeps them showing up at church when they don’t feel like it.

DAY 4

Clothed for Life Together

Read: Colossians 3:12-14 Go further: Ephesians 4:1-3

Above all, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. **Colossians 3:14**

Paul writes as if believers are getting dressed for the day. Because you are “God’s chosen ones, holy and dearly loved,” there are things to put on: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Church life puts us close to people who are different from us, and sooner or later someone will let you down. So Paul adds two more: bear with one another, and forgive, just as the Lord has forgiven you. Forgiving doesn’t mean pretending a wrong didn’t happen. It means releasing the debt, as God released yours. None of this earns God’s love; you put it on because you already have it.

RESPOND *Where do you need each of these most this week? Write a person or situation beside each.*

	Where I need it
Compassion	
Humility	
Patience	
Forgiveness	

KEY TRUTH

I forgive others out of the forgiveness I’ve already received.

PRAY: Lord, Your forgiveness toward me is more than I can measure. Clothe me with compassion, humility, and patience, and help me extend to others the mercy You have shown me. Amen.

DAY 5

Leaders Who Serve

Read: Acts 6:1-6 Go further: 1 Timothy 3:8-13

Brothers and sisters, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we can appoint to this duty. Acts 6:3

The church grew fast, and growing pains came with it. Greek-speaking widows were being overlooked in the daily food distribution. The complaint was real, and the apostles took it seriously. But their calling was to pray and preach, so they asked the church to choose seven trusted men to oversee the care. Many Bible teachers see here the beginning of deacons, from a Greek word meaning servant. Baptist churches still look to two kinds of leaders: pastors, who shepherd and teach, and deacons, who serve and care. Notice how the problem was solved: honestly, prayerfully, and by trusting godly people.

RESPOND *Who serves your church family? Write their names, and lift each one up in prayer this week.*

My pastor: _____

A deacon: _____

A teacher or leader: _____

Someone behind the scenes: _____

KEY TRUTH

God provides pastors and deacons to shepherd and serve His people.

PRAY: Father, thank You for Pastor James, our deacons, and all who serve our church. Give them wisdom, strength, and joy. Show me how I can serve alongside them. Amen.

DAY 6

A Church That Sends

Read: Acts 13:1-3 Go further: Romans 10:13-15

Then after they had fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them off. Acts 13:3

The church in Antioch was led by a mixed group of prophets and teachers, including men from Cyprus and North Africa, a close friend of Herod, and Saul, the former persecutor we know as Paul. While they were worshiping and fasting (going without food to focus on prayer), the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul.” So the church sent off two of its best teachers. That began Paul’s missionary journeys, which carried the good news across the Roman world. Churches still send. Some believers go; others pray and give so they can go. Every believer has a part.

RESPOND *Choose a missionary, a people group, or a nation to pray for this week. Write a short prayer for them.*

KEY TRUTH

Some go and some send, but every believer has a part in God’s mission.

PRAY: Lord of the harvest, thank You for those who carry the gospel to places I may never go. Keep them strong. Show me my part in sending the good news. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor or Pastor James how our church supports missionaries, and how you can take part.

Getting Connected at Pleasant Grove

Belonging grows one step at a time. Here are some simple ways to get connected with your church family over the next few weeks. Check each one off as you do it. There is no rush and no test. Just take the next step.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Come to Sunday School at 9:45 AM and find a class to call home. | ☐ Worship with the church on Sunday at 11:00 AM. |
| ☐ Try Wednesday Bible study at 6:00 PM. | ☐ Meet with Pastor James and share how you came to faith. |
| ☐ Learn the names of three people, and pray for them by name. | ☐ Hear the faith story of someone who has been at Pleasant Grove for years. |
| ☐ Share a meal or coffee with someone from church. | ☐ Learn the names of our deacons. |
| ☐ Find one place to serve, even a small one. | ☐ Add the church's prayer needs to your own prayer list. |
| ☐ Ask Pastor James about baptism and church membership. | ☐ Invite a friend or neighbor to come with you. |

My notes

i Not sure where to start? Tell your mentor or Pastor James you'd like to get connected. They will be glad to help you take the next step.

Two Pictures of the Gospel

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the gospel made visible: water, bread, and cup that point us to Jesus.

THIS WEEK

Water on the Desert Road

READ FIRST: [Acts 8:26-39](#)

An official from Ethiopia, the treasurer for his nation's queen, had traveled a long way to worship in Jerusalem. On the ride home he was reading the prophet Isaiah aloud, puzzling over a passage about someone "led like a sheep to the slaughter." God sent Philip, one of the seven chosen to serve in Acts 6, to meet him on that desert road.

Philip asked, "Do you understand what you're reading?" The man admitted he needed someone to guide him and invited Philip up into the chariot. Beginning with that very passage, Philip showed him that it pointed to Jesus, the Lamb of God who suffered, died in our place, and rose again. This outsider from a faraway land found he was fully welcome in God's family.

Soon they passed some water, and the official asked what would keep him from being baptized. They stopped the chariot, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. Then the man "went on his way rejoicing." Notice the order: he heard the gospel, believed it, and then was baptized. Baptism didn't save him. Jesus did. Baptism was his first public step of obedience.

Baptists call baptism and the Lord's Supper ordinances, because Jesus ordered His church to practice them. Neither one saves us. Both are pictures that point to what Jesus has already done. This week looks at why Jesus was baptized, what baptism means, and what the Lord's Supper calls us to remember. The memory verse describes the picture: buried with Christ and raised to "walk in newness of life." If you have questions about being baptized, this is a good week to talk with Pastor James.

Put It Into Practice

Read Romans 6:3-4 each day this week. If you have been baptized, write down what you remember about that day and thank God for it. If you haven't, write down your questions and set a time to talk with Pastor James.

Memory Verse

Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.

[Romans 6:4](#)

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Baptism may raise questions: What happens? Is it too late for me? What if I was baptized before? Listen, answer simply, and invite them to talk with Pastor James. Don't rush or pressure them. Celebrate every step, and let the decision be theirs.

When You Meet

- 1 What stands out to you in the Ethiopian official's story? What part of it feels like your own story?
- 2 Why do you think Jesus gave His church physical pictures like water, bread, and a cup?
- 3 What would you like to ask Pastor James about baptism or the Lord's Supper?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, You died, were buried, and rose again to make me new. Thank You for baptism and the Lord's Supper, which keep that good news before my eyes. Help me obey You gladly. Amen.

DAY 1

Why Jesus Was Baptized

Read: Mark 1:9-11 Go further: Matthew 3:13-17

And a voice came from heaven: "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased." **Mark 1:11**

John the Baptist called people to repent, turning away from sin and back to God, and to be baptized in the Jordan as a sign of it. Jesus came to the river too, though He had no sin to turn from. He was baptized to obey His Father, to stand with the sinners He came to save, and to lead the way for His followers. The moment He rose from the water, the Spirit descended like a dove and the Father's voice was heard: Father, Son, and Spirit, all present at once. When a believer is baptized, they are following Jesus into the water.

RESPOND *Jesus went into the water first. What does His example say to you about your own next steps?*

KEY TRUTH

Jesus went first, and He calls His followers to walk where He walked.

PRAY: Jesus, thank You for leading the way. You never sinned, yet You humbled Yourself to obey the Father. Give me a heart that is glad to follow You. Amen.

DAY 2

Faith First, Then Water

Read: Acts 2:37-41 Go further: Matthew 28:18-20

So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them.

Acts 2:41

Peter had just told the crowd that the Jesus they crucified was alive, God's promised King. They were "pierced to the heart" and asked, "Brothers, what should we do?" Peter called them to repent, turning from their sin to God, and to be baptized in Jesus' name. Read quickly, verse 38 might sound as if the water brings forgiveness. But the whole New Testament teaches that forgiveness is God's gift, received by grace through faith in Christ. Baptism follows that faith as its public sign, and verse 41 shows the order. Baptism doesn't make you a Christian. It announces that you already are one.

RESPOND *Complete each sentence with a word from the bank.*

Word bank: *accepted gift save sin*

1. Salvation is God's _____, received by faith in Jesus.
2. Repenting means turning away from _____ and toward God.
3. In Acts 2, people _____ the message, then were baptized.
4. Baptism does not _____ anyone; it shows they belong to Jesus.

KEY TRUTH

Jesus saves me by grace through faith; baptism shows the world I'm His.

PRAY: Lord Jesus, thank You that forgiveness is Your gift, not my achievement. I have turned to You. Give me joy and courage to obey You, one step after another. Amen.

DAY 3

Buried and Raised

Read: Romans 6:3-4 Go further: Colossians 2:12-14

Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? **Romans 6:3**

Paul uses baptism to explain what happened when you trusted Christ. By faith you were joined to Him, so His death counts as your death to sin, and His resurrection life becomes yours. Baptism acts this out. The word baptize means to dip or immerse. The plunge beneath the water shows Jesus' death and burial, and the end of your old life. Rising from the water shows His resurrection and the new life you now live. The old you, ruled by sin, has been buried. You are free to live a new life, one ordinary day at a time.

RESPOND Fill in the chart: what each moment of baptism says about Jesus, and what it says about you.

	What it says about Jesus	What it says about me
Under the water		
Up from the water		

KEY TRUTH

**Buried with Christ, raised with Christ:
that is my story now.**

PRAY: Lord Jesus, You died and rose again, and by faith I share in Your risen life. Help me leave my old ways in the grave and walk with You today. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Walk your mentor through what each part of baptism shows. Then invite them to share the story of their own baptism.

DAY 4

A Jailer's Midnight Question

Read: Acts 16:25-34 Go further: Romans 10:9-10

They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household." **Acts 16:31**

Paul and Silas had been beaten and locked in stocks, yet at midnight they were praying and singing hymns. An earthquake threw open the doors. The jailer, sure his prisoners had escaped, drew his sword to take his own life. Paul shouted that they were all still there. Trembling, the jailer asked the question underneath every other question, and the answer fit in one sentence. That night he and his household heard the word, believed, and were baptized. The man who had locked them up now washed their wounds and fed them, rejoicing. If God could reach him that night, He can reach anyone.

RESPOND How would you answer the jailer's question for a friend today? Try it in two or three plain sentences.

KEY TRUTH

No one is too far gone for Jesus to reach and save.

PRAY: Lord Jesus, thank You that salvation is simple enough for anyone to receive and deep enough to change everything. Give me words to tell others how to be saved. Amen.

DAY 5

A Meal to Remember

Read: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 Go further: Luke 22:14-20

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

1 Corinthians 11:26

Paul passes on what he received from the Lord: on His last night before the cross, Jesus broke bread and said it was His body, given for them. Then He lifted the cup and spoke of a new covenant sealed with His blood, God's binding promise to forgive all who trust Him. Both times, He said to do it "in remembrance of me." We forget easily. The Lord's Supper, also called Communion, keeps His death fresh in our memory. At Pleasant Grove, the church shares it about once a quarter. If you have questions about taking part, ask Pastor James.

RESPOND *What do you want to remember the next time your church shares the Lord's Supper, and why?*

KEY TRUTH

The Lord's table points me back to the cross and ahead to His return.

PRAY: Lord Jesus, You gave Yourself for me, body and blood. I don't want to forget it. Keep Your cross at the center of my life until You come again. Amen.

DAY 6

Coming to the Table Honestly

Read: 1 Corinthians 11:27-28 Go further: 1 John 1:8-9

Let a person examine himself; in this way let him eat the bread and drink from the cup. 1 Corinthians 11:28

The church in Corinth had turned the Lord's Supper into a mess. Some feasted while poorer members went hungry. Paul warned that taking the bread and cup "in an unworthy manner," careless toward Christ and His people, is a sin against the Lord's body and blood. The self-examination he calls for isn't about proving you're good enough. No one is. It's an honest pause: Is there sin I need to confess? Is there someone I need to forgive or make things right with? Examining yourself isn't meant to drive you away. It leads you back to the grace you are remembering.

RESPOND *Take a quiet moment with God. Is there sin to confess, or someone to forgive? Write a short prayer.*

KEY TRUTH

Honest self-examination leads me to God's grace, not away from it.

PRAY: Search my heart, Lord. Show me any sin I've tolerated and any grudge I'm holding. Thank You that Your forgiveness is greater than my failures. Make me clean. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor how they prepare their heart before the church shares the Lord's Supper.

Taking the Step of Baptism

If you have trusted Christ, baptism is a joyful next step. It won't save you; only Jesus saves. But Jesus commanded it, and in the New Testament new believers were baptized soon after they believed. Here are answers to some questions adults often ask.

— Why It Matters

Baptism is a public picture of the gospel and of your new life. When you go under the water, you show Jesus' death and burial, and your old life buried with Him. When you rise, you show His resurrection and your new life in Him. It tells your church family, and the watching world, that you belong to Jesus.

— Why Under the Water?

The Greek word for baptize means to dip or plunge. In the New Testament, people went down into the water and came up out of it (Acts 8:38-39). Immersion paints the picture of burial and resurrection that Romans 6 describes.

— What If I Was Baptized Before?

Many adults were baptized as babies, or before they understood the gospel. If that is your story, bring it to Pastor James. He will be glad to talk it through with you.

— What to Expect

You'll talk with Pastor James first. On the day, you'll step into the baptistry (the baptism pool) with him. He will tell the church that you have trusted Christ, then briefly immerse you and raise you up out of the water. Then your church family will celebrate with you.

— The Lord's Supper at Pleasant Grove

Our church shares the Lord's Supper about once a quarter. The bread and cup proclaim Jesus' death until He returns. If you have questions about taking part, ask Pastor James.

— My Questions

Write down questions to bring to Pastor James or your mentor.

A Life of Worship

God is worthy of our highest praise, on Sunday with His people and every day with our whole lives.

THIS WEEK

An Invitation to Worship

READ FIRST: **Psalm 95:1-7**

Picture a crowd of worshipers making their way toward the temple, and a voice calling out to them: Come! Let's shout for joy to "the rock of our salvation." Let's come into His presence with thanks and songs. For anyone whose life has felt like shifting sand, the Rock is a name worth singing about. Worship in Psalm 95 begins with gladness, not grim duty.

Then come the reasons. The Lord is a great King above every so-called god. Everything from the caves beneath our feet to "the mountain peaks" belongs to Him. He made the sea and shaped the dry land with His hands. Look out from a Blue Ridge overlook, or watch fog lift off the Yadkin River on an autumn morning, and you will feel a little of what the psalm's writer felt: small, and glad to belong to Someone so great.

The memory verse shifts the mood from shouting to kneeling. Bowing low says with your body what your heart believes: He is God, and I am not. And the psalm ends this section on a tender note: we are the people He shepherds, "the sheep under his care."

Worship is treating God as the One who matters most. It happens when the church gathers to sing, pray, give, and hear God's Word. But worship is not something you leave in the parking lot. We don't worship to earn God's love; we worship because He has already shown it. This week looks at gathered worship on Sunday, the everyday worship of a life offered to God, and anything that competes for His place.

Put It Into Practice

Arrive a few minutes early for worship this Sunday and ask God to prepare your heart. Afterward, write down one thing you learned about God and one way you will live it out on Monday. Then use this week's Going Deeper page to write a psalm of your own.

Memory Verse

*Come, let's worship and bow down;
let's kneel before the LORD our
Maker.*

Psalm 95:6

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Church services can feel foreign to someone new: when to stand, what the songs mean, why we give. Sit with them, and explain what is happening without making them feel behind. Afterward, ask what they noticed. Help them see that worship continues all week.

When You Meet

- 1 What has worship at church felt like for you so far? What feels meaningful, and what still feels unfamiliar?
- 2 Where are you most aware of God's greatness: outdoors, in music, in Scripture, or somewhere else?
- 3 What might it look like for your ordinary tasks this week to become acts of worship?

Prayer

Lord, You are the Rock of my salvation and the Maker of everything I see. I bow before You with thanks. Make my Sundays glad and my weekdays an offering to You. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAY 1

Giving God His Due

Read: Psalm 29:1-2 Go further: Revelation 4:8-11

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness. [Psalm 29:2](#)

Psalm 29 opens with a threefold call: ascribe to the Lord. To ascribe means to give credit where it is due. The psalm even calls the heavenly beings, the angels around God's throne, to do it. We don't add to God's glory when we praise Him, any more than admiring a sunrise makes it brighter. We recognize what is already true. Everyone gives glory to something. We spend our time, money, and hopes on whatever we think is most worth having: success, comfort, approval, a relationship. Worship turns all of that toward the only One who truly deserves it.

RESPOND Turn Psalm 29:2 into your own prayer, telling God what He is worth to you.

KEY TRUTH

Worship gives God the credit He has always deserved.

PRAY: Lord, glory and strength belong to You. I give You the honor You are due. Help me live today as if You matter most, because You do. Amen.

DAY 2

Why We Sing

Read: Psalm 96:1-4 Go further: Colossians 3:16

Sing a new song to the LORD; let the whole earth sing to the LORD. [Psalm 96:1](#)

Psalm 96 is a call to worship with a wide-open heart: bless the Lord's name, proclaim His salvation "from day to day," and declare His glory among the nations. Some adults would rather not sing in church at all. But God isn't holding auditions. When the church sings together, we teach one another, remind ourselves what is true, and answer God's goodness with joy. If you don't know a tune yet, read the words as they are sung and let them become your prayer. Before long, the words will come back to you in the middle of an ordinary week.

RESPOND What song or hymn has helped you worship so far? Which line means the most to you, and why?

KEY TRUTH

God cares more about a willing heart than a trained voice.

PRAY: Lord, You have done great things for me. Put a new song in my heart, and help me sing Your praise, even when I'm unsure of the tune. Amen.

DAY 3

Glad to Gather

Read: Psalm 122:1 Go further: Psalm 84:1-4

I rejoiced with those who said to me, "Let's go to the house of the LORD." **Psalm 122:1**

Psalm 122 is one of the Songs of Ascents, sung by travelers on the road up to Jerusalem for the great festivals. For many, the trip took days on foot. For you, Sunday might mean a drive down a country road after a long week, or walking in alone and not knowing many names yet. Worship at Pleasant Grove begins at 11:00 AM. Watch for songs of praise, prayer, Scripture read aloud, the offering, and the sermon, where God's Word is explained and applied. Many services close with an invitation, an open moment to respond to God. Come expecting Him to meet you.

RESPOND Which of these could help you prepare for Sunday worship? Check the ones you'll try.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Get enough rest on Saturday night | ☐ Pray for Pastor James and the service |
| ☐ Arrive a few minutes early | ☐ Bring your Bible and this guide |
| ☐ Sit near someone you know, or want to | ☐ Silence your phone before the service starts |
| ☐ Ask God to speak to you | ☐ _____ |

KEY TRUTH

I come to worship expecting God to meet me there.

PRAY: Lord, make me glad when it's time to gather with Your people. Prepare me before I walk in the door, and meet me there. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor how they get ready for Sunday, and what helps them worship with their whole heart.

DAY 4

A Sermon That Ran Late

Read: Acts 20:7-12 Go further: Nehemiah 8:1-6

...a young man named Eutychus was sitting on a window sill and sank into a deep sleep as Paul kept on talking.

Acts 20:9

On the first day of the week, the day Jesus rose, the believers in Troas gathered to break bread. Paul was leaving the next morning, so he taught until midnight in a crowded upstairs room. Eutychus, a young man perched in the window, drifted off to sleep and fell three stories to his death. Paul went down, embraced him, and said, "Don't be alarmed, because he's alive." God had given him back his life. Then everyone went back upstairs, shared the meal, and listened until dawn. They were hungry for God's Word. Listening well is part of worship, not a break from it.

RESPOND Take notes during this Sunday's sermon. You'll find more sermon notes pages at the back of this book.

Passage: _____

Main point: _____

A verse to remember: _____

One thing to do: _____

KEY TRUTH

I listen to sermons to obey God, not just to hear about Him.

PRAY: Lord, thank You for Pastor James and the Word he opens each week. Wake me up to listen, and help me practice what I hear. Amen.

DAY 5

Worship Beyond Sunday

Read: Romans 12:1-2 Go further: Colossians 3:17, 23-24

...I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship.

Romans 12:1

The first eleven chapters of Romans describe God's mercy: we were lost in sin, and He saved us by grace through faith in Christ. Chapter 12 opens with the word therefore. Everything Paul asks next flows from what God has already done. Old Testament sacrifices died on the altar. A living sacrifice keeps showing up, day after day. That includes Monday morning at work, caring for an aging parent, what you watch at night, and how you speak to the cashier. And verse 2 shows how the change happens: not by copying the world around you, but as God renews your mind through His Word.

RESPOND *Where will you spend your time this week? Write how you can honor God in each place.*

Where I'll be this week	How I can honor God there

KEY TRUTH

Because God has been merciful to me, I offer Him all of me.

PRAY: Father, You have been so merciful to me. Take my body, my time, my work, and my words, and use them for Your glory. Renew my mind today. Amen.

DAY 6

Nothing in God's Place

Read: Exodus 20:1-6 Go further: 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10

Do not have other gods besides me. Exodus 20:3

Before God gave a single command, He reminded Israel who He was: the Lord who brought them out of slavery. Obedience was their response to rescue, not a way to earn it. An idol is anything we look to for what only God can give: security, identity, comfort, or meaning. It might be money, a career, a relationship, approval, or a substance that numbs the pain. God describes Himself as jealous, and that can sound strange. But His jealousy is not insecurity. It is the rightful, protective love of the One who rescued you and won't share your heart with what would destroy it.

RESPOND *When life gets hard, what do you run to for comfort? What would running to God look like?*

KEY TRUTH

Only God can give what I've been looking for everywhere else.

PRAY: Lord, You alone are God. You rescued me, and You deserve all of me. Where I have trusted something else, turn my heart back to You. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor to share an idol they have had to turn from, and what helped them do it.

A Psalm from Your Life

The Psalms were Israel's songbook and prayer book. In them God's people praise, give thanks, cry out, confess, and trust, often all in the same psalm. Use these cards to write a psalm of your own. Be honest. God welcomes your joy and your hard questions alike.

Praise Him

Psalm 29:1-2

Tell God who He is. Which of His qualities have you seen lately: His power, faithfulness, patience, or mercy?

Thank Him

Psalm 136:1-9

Name specific things He has done for you. Big rescues and small daily gifts both belong here.

Cry Out to Him

Psalm 13:1-6

Many psalms ask God how long a hardship will last. Tell Him plainly what hurts or confuses you. Honest prayer is still faith.

Confess to Him

Psalm 32:1-5

Admit where you have fallen short, and receive His forgiveness. David found that hiding sin weighed him down, and confessing it set him free.

Trust Him

Psalm 23:1-3

Write a truth about God you will hold on to. Many psalms turn from fear to faith with one small word. Try it: But You, Lord, are...

Praise Him Again

Psalm 95:6

Many psalms end where they began, with praise. Close your psalm the same way. Then read the whole thing aloud to God as your prayer.

Made to Serve

Jesus came to serve, not to be served, and He has gifted you to serve others in His name.

THIS WEEK

Greatness, Jesus' Way

READ FIRST: [Mark 10:35-45](#)

James and John were two of Jesus' closest followers. One day they came to Him with a bold request: when He took His throne in glory, could they sit at His right and His left? In their world, those were the seats of highest honor. When the other ten disciples heard about it, they were angry, perhaps because they wanted those seats too.

Jesus called them all together and described how power usually works. Rulers lord it over people, and the powerful throw their weight around. Then He said, "But it is not so among you." In His kingdom the way up is down. Whoever wants to be great must become a servant, and whoever wants to be first must be the slave of all. Jesus Himself is the pattern. He came to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. A ransom is the price paid to set a captive free. At the cross, Jesus paid that price for you.

That turns our idea of greatness upside down. We tend to measure people by titles, paychecks, and power. Jesus measures by service. And He doesn't ask you to serve in your own strength. This week's memory verse says every believer has received a gift from God to use for others. A steward manages what belongs to someone else. You are a steward of God's grace, trusted to pass it on.

This week you'll look at Jesus' humble example, the different gifts God gives His people, and what serving looks like at work, at home, and in your community. Healthy branches reach outward. As your roots go deeper in Christ, your life will start reaching toward others.

Put It Into Practice

Choose one way to serve this week that no one is likely to thank you for: a meal for a neighbor, a ride to an appointment, an hour helping at church. Ask Pastor James or your mentor where help is needed.

Memory Verse

Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

1 Peter 4:10

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Some new believers think they have nothing to offer. Others sign up for everything at once and burn out. Listen for which is true of your friend. Help them find one simple place to serve, ideally beside you, and tell them plainly what gifts you already see in them.

When You Meet

- ① Where do you feel the pull to be noticed, respected, or first? How does Jesus' example speak to that?
- ② Who has served you in a way you still remember? What made it matter so much?
- ③ What gifts or abilities do you think God has given you? What gifts does your mentor see in you?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are the King, yet You came to serve and gave Your life to set me free. Take my pride and my need to be noticed. Teach me to use Your gifts to serve others. Amen.

DAY 1

All the Way Down

Read: Philippians 2:5-8 Go further: John 13:12-15

Instead he emptied himself by assuming the form of a servant, taking on the likeness of humanity.

Philippians 2:7

Paul wrote these lines to a church he loved, urging them to set aside rivalry and pride and look to Jesus. Jesus has always been God, with every right to glory. Yet He didn't cling to His privileges or use them for His own advantage. He came down to us, lived as a servant, and obeyed the Father all the way to a criminal's death on a cross. He never stopped being God. He chose the lowest place out of love. Paul says to adopt that same attitude. Humility doesn't mean thinking you're worthless. It means you no longer need to be first.

RESPOND *Where do you usually expect others to serve you? What would it look like to serve there instead?*

KEY TRUTH

Jesus stepped down to serve me, so I am free to serve.

PRAY: Lord Jesus, You had every right to be served, yet You came to serve and died for me. Give me Your attitude, and free me from needing to be first. Amen.

DAY 2

Different Gifts, One Body

Read: Romans 12:4-8 Go further: 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts... [Romans 12:6](#)

Your body has many parts with different jobs. Paul says the church works the same way. Every believer belongs to the others, and each one has something to contribute. A spiritual gift is an ability God gives a Christian to build up His people. Some serve in practical ways. Some teach, encourage, give generously, lead with care, or show mercy to people in pain. No gift makes you better than anyone else, and none is too small to matter. If you don't know your gifts yet, that's normal. They usually come into focus as you serve and others tell you what they see.

RESPOND *Which of these do you enjoy, or have others noticed in you? Check any that fit.*

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Serving: handling practical needs | ☐ Teaching: helping others understand |
| ☐ Encouraging: lifting people up | ☐ Giving: sharing resources freely |
| ☐ Leading: organizing people toward a goal | ☐ Showing mercy: caring for people in pain |
| ☐ _____ | |

KEY TRUTH

God has given me a gift, and His church needs it.

PRAY: Father, thank You for placing me in Your church and giving me a part to play. Show me my gifts, and keep me humble as I use them. Amen.

DAY 3

When Did We See You?

Read: Matthew 25:34-40 Go further: Matthew 10:42

And the King will answer them, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” **Matthew 25:40**

Jesus described the day He will return as King. He welcomes His people and thanks them for feeding Him, giving Him a drink, taking Him in, clothing Him, and visiting Him when He was sick or in prison. Surprised, they don’t remember doing any of it for Him. Their kindness wasn’t a performance or a way to earn heaven. It was simply what their new hearts did. Jesus takes it personally when His people care for the overlooked. The struggling neighbor, the lonely widow, the man just out of prison: serving them is serving Him.

RESPOND Think of real people near you. Write a name or initials and one way you could help.

	Someone I know	One way I could help
Hungry or struggling		
Lonely or new in town		
Sick or in prison		

KEY TRUTH

When I serve someone the world overlooks, I am serving Jesus.

PRAY: Lord Jesus, open my eyes to the people I usually walk past. Let my care for them be an act of love for You. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: Who around us is easily overlooked? How could we serve them together?

DAY 4

Who You Really Work For

Read: Colossians 3:23-24 Go further: Colossians 3:17

Whatever you do, do it from the heart, as something done for the Lord and not for people... **Colossians 3:23**

Most work goes unnoticed. Changing diapers, stocking shelves on the night shift, caring for an aging parent, fixing the same leak twice: few people will ever thank you. Paul says to do it all wholeheartedly, as if Jesus Himself were your boss, because He is. Paid or unpaid, your ordinary tasks can be service to Christ. That truth frees you from living for other people’s approval. A harsh supervisor or an ungrateful household doesn’t get the final word on your work. The Lord sees it, and His reward will outlast any paycheck. As Paul says, “You serve the Lord Christ.”

RESPOND Which task in your week feels most thankless? How would it change if you did it for Jesus?

KEY TRUTH

Jesus sees my ordinary work, and I can do it for Him.

PRAY: Lord, You see the work no one else notices. Help me do today’s tasks wholeheartedly, for You and not for applause. Amen.

DAY 5

Free to Serve

Read: Galatians 5:13-14 Go further: Romans 13:8-10

For you were called to be free, brothers and sisters; only don't use this freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love. Galatians 5:13

Galatians is Paul's great letter about freedom. You are saved by grace, not by keeping rules, so you no longer have to earn God's love. But some people hear that and decide they can now live however they please. Paul closes that door. Freedom in Christ is not a license for the flesh, meaning our old self-centered desires. It is freedom to love. The whole law, Paul says, comes down to one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Serving out of guilt or to be seen will wear you out. Serving because Christ has set you free can become a joy.

RESPOND *Who do you serve more out of duty than love? What might change if love led the way?*

KEY TRUTH

Christ set me free to love and serve, not to please myself.

PRAY: Jesus, thank You for setting me free. Keep me from using that freedom selfishly, and fill my serving with real love. Amen.

DAY 6

The Clothes Dorcas Made

Read: Acts 9:36-42 Go further: Hebrews 6:10

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which is translated Dorcas). She was always doing good works and acts of charity. Acts 9:36

The Bible introduces Dorcas in two short sentences, and they tell you what mattered about her. When she got sick and died, her friends sent for Peter. He found the upstairs room full of weeping widows, many with no income of their own, holding up the robes and clothes she had made. Peter prayed, God raised her to life, and many people in Joppa believed in the Lord. The miracle was God's doing. But notice what her friends held up first: ordinary things her hands had made. Her kindness had been pointing people to Jesus all along.

RESPOND *What everyday skill or habit could you use to serve someone this week? Who, and how?*

KEY TRUTH

God can use my ordinary kindness to show people what Jesus is like.

PRAY: Lord, thank You for the people whose quiet kindness pointed me to You. Use my hands and everyday skills to serve someone this week. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor or a Christian friend whose quiet service shaped their faith. Then share who shaped yours.

Ways to Serve This Month

Serving usually starts small. Here are ideas for serving at church, around Ronda, and right where you live. Check the ones you try, and circle one or two you would like to keep doing.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Greet people and help newcomers find their way on Sunday | ☐ Help set up or clean up after a church meal |
| ☐ Take a meal to someone who is sick, grieving, or worn out | ☐ Offer a ride to church or to a medical appointment |
| ☐ Call or visit a church member who can't get out much | ☐ Help an older neighbor with yard work, repairs, or groceries |
| ☐ Offer a skill you already have: cooking, fixing, driving, music, numbers | ☐ Volunteer with a local food pantry or community ministry |
| ☐ Sit with someone who is alone at church | ☐ Write a thank-you note to a Sunday School teacher or Pastor James |
| ☐ Pray each day this week for Pastor James and the church's leaders | ☐ Check in each week on someone going through a hard season |

My notes

i Not sure where to start? Ask Pastor James or your mentor where help is needed. Start with one thing, do it faithfully, and let God grow it from there.

What the Spirit Grows

As you stay close to Jesus, His Spirit grows His character in you, one season at a time.

THIS WEEK

In Step with the Spirit

READ FIRST: **Galatians 5:16-17, 22-25**

Drive past an apple orchard in the Brushy Mountains in early fall, and you won't see the trees straining. If the roots are healthy and the rain and sun come, fruit shows up in its season. You could tie store-bought apples onto a dead tree, but no one would be fooled for long. Real fruit is evidence of life inside.

In Galatians 5, Paul is honest about a struggle every believer feels. The flesh, our old sinful nature with its selfish desires, pulls one way. The Holy Spirit, who lives in every Christian, pulls the other. If you have felt that tug-of-war since you trusted Christ, you are not doing it wrong. It is a sign the Spirit is at work in you. Paul also says that those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh. It still pulls, but it no longer owns you.

Then Paul describes what the Spirit produces: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. He calls it fruit, not fruits. It is one crop, the character of Jesus, showing up in nine ways. No law stands against any of it.

How does it grow? Paul says to walk by the Spirit and keep in step with Him, like matching your stride to a friend's on a long walk. You keep in step by reading God's Word, praying, obeying what He shows you, and turning from the flesh. You can't manufacture this fruit by gritting your teeth, but you can stay close to the One who grows it. This week you'll look at each part of the fruit. Be patient. Fruit takes a season.

Put It Into Practice

Write the nine parts of the fruit of the Spirit on a card and put it where you'll see it every day, like a mirror or dashboard. Each evening, note one place you saw the Spirit at work in you and one place you need His help.

Memory Verse

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things.

Galatians 5:22-23

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

New believers are often discouraged when old reactions flare up. Help your friend see that the fruit of the Spirit grows over time, not overnight. Point out growth you have noticed in them, and be honest about the fruit God is still growing in you.

When You Meet

- 1 Since trusting Christ, where have you felt the tug-of-war between the flesh and the Spirit most?
- 2 Which part of the fruit of the Spirit do you see growing in yourself? Which feels furthest away?
- 3 What helps you keep in step with the Spirit day to day? What tends to pull you out of step?

Prayer

Holy Spirit, thank You for living in me. I can't produce Your fruit on my own. Keep me close to Jesus, and grow in me love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Amen.

DAY 1

Love Is Something You Do

Read: 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 Go further: Nehemiah 8:10

Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not arrogant... 1 Corinthians 13:4

These verses are often read at weddings, but Paul first wrote them to a quarreling church that prized impressive gifts over love. Real love, as Paul describes it, is more than a warm feeling. It isn't rude or self-seeking. It isn't easily irritated, and it doesn't keep a record of wrongs. Try reading the list with your own name in place of the word love. It won't take long to find where you need to grow. Only Jesus fits the list perfectly. As His Spirit grows His love in you, joy grows too: a deep gladness in God that hard days can't take away.

RESPOND Which line in today's reading is hardest for you to live out right now? With whom?

KEY TRUTH

The Spirit is growing Jesus' kind of love in me.

PRAY: Holy Spirit, grow Your love in me: patient, kind, and slow to keep score. Fill me with a joy in You that hard days can't steal. Amen.

DAY 2

Peace the World Can't Give

Read: John 14:27 Go further: Isaiah 26:3

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful. John 14:27

Jesus said these words at His last meal with His disciples, the night before He was crucified. His friends were confused and afraid. Within hours He would be arrested, and they would scatter. He didn't promise them an easy road. He promised His presence. The world's kind of peace depends on circumstances: the bills are paid, the test results are good, everyone at home is getting along. Jesus' peace is different. It is a settled trust in Him that holds even when circumstances don't. It doesn't mean you'll never feel anxious. It means anxiety doesn't get the last word. Bring your troubled heart to Him.

RESPOND What is troubling your heart today? Write it down, then write one truth about Jesus to set beside it.

KEY TRUTH

Jesus' peace doesn't depend on my circumstances. It depends on Him.

PRAY: Jesus, You know what is troubling me today. I hand it to You. Guard my heart with Your peace, even before anything changes. Amen.

DAY 3

Between Planting and Harvest

Read: James 5:7-8 Go further: Psalm 27:14

See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth and is patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. James 5:7

Anyone who has put in a garden knows you can't rush it. You plant, water, pull weeds, and wait for rain you can't control. James wrote to believers who were being mistreated by the rich and powerful. He told them to be patient until the Lord's coming, because Jesus will return and set things right. Meanwhile, they were to strengthen their hearts. Patience isn't passive. It is steady faithfulness while you wait on God's timing: for a job, a diagnosis, a loved one to come home, a relationship to heal, or your own growth to show. The Spirit grows this fruit slowly, too.

RESPOND What are you waiting on God for? Name up to three things, and pray over each.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

KEY TRUTH

Patience is steady faithfulness while I wait for God's timing.

PRAY: Lord, waiting is hard for me. Strengthen my heart while I wait, and help me keep planting, watering, and trusting You for the harvest. Amen.

DAY 4

Bitterness Out, Kindness In

Read: Ephesians 4:31-32 Go further: Micah 6:8

And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ. Ephesians 4:32

Paul gives two lists. The first is what to get rid of: bitterness, anger, wrath, shouting, slander, and malice, which means wanting someone to suffer. Bitterness can grow for years after a betrayal, a divorce, or a family feud, and its roots choke out everything else. The second list is what to put on in their place, for a reason rooted in the gospel: God has forgiven you in Christ. Kindness is love in action. Its close cousin, goodness, means doing what is right even when no one is watching. Neither comes from willpower alone. Both are fruit the Spirit grows.

RESPOND Choose one or two to practice this week, and check them off when you do.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Speak gently when I'm frustrated | ☐ Hold back a sharp comment or post |
| ☐ Do a kindness for someone who can't repay me | ☐ Pray for someone I resent |
| ☐ Speak well of someone behind their back | ☐ Do the right thing when no one is watching |
| ☐ _____ | |

KEY TRUTH

God's forgiveness frees me to put away bitterness and choose kindness.

PRAY: Father, You have been so kind to me in Christ. Pull up every root of bitterness in me, and make me kind, compassionate, and good. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: Has bitterness ever taken root in you? How did God help you let it go?

DAY 5

Faithful in Little Things

Read: Luke 16:10 Go further: Proverbs 15:1

Whoever is faithful in very little is also faithful in much, and whoever is unrighteous in very little is also unrighteous in much. Luke 16:10

Jesus said this right after a story about a dishonest manager, and His point is plain: character shows up in small things. How you handle a few dollars, a small promise, or a job no one will check shows what you would do with more. Faithfulness means being dependable. You show up, keep your word, and finish what you start. Growing beside it is gentleness. Gentle doesn't mean weak. Think of a strong man holding a newborn: all that strength, carefully controlled. Proverbs 15:1 says a soft answer can calm someone's anger. At work, at home, and in traffic, the Spirit grows both.

RESPOND *Where is God asking you to be faithful in something small? What would that look like this week?*

KEY TRUTH

Small, faithful choices and gentle answers show the Spirit at work in me.

PRAY: Lord, make me dependable in small things and gentle when others are harsh. Let my word be something people can count on. Amen.

DAY 6

Rebuilding the Wall

Read: Proverbs 25:28 Go further: Titus 2:11-12

A person who does not control his temper is like a city whose wall is broken down. Proverbs 25:28

Long ago, a city's wall was its protection. Once it was broken down, raiders and thieves could walk in. Self-control works like that wall. It is the Spirit-given strength to say no to what harms you and yes to what is good. Many of us know what a broken wall feels like: a temper that flares, spending that spirals, a drink or a screen or a habit that won't let go. Paul told Titus that God's grace doesn't only forgive us; it also teaches us to say no to godlessness and live sensibly. Walls get rebuilt one stone at a time, and rarely alone.

RESPOND *Plan ahead for a weak place in your wall.*

My weak spot	What I'll do instead	Who can help me

KEY TRUTH

The Spirit helps me rebuild my wall, one choice at a time.

PRAY: Holy Spirit, You know where my wall is broken. Give me strength to say no to what harms me and yes to what honors You. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Tell your mentor about one area where self-control is hard for you. Ask them to pray with you and check in.

A Closer Look at the Fruit

Galatians 5:22-23 names nine qualities the Spirit grows in every believer. Each card gives a short description and a verse to look up. Over the coming weeks, write down where you see each one growing, or where you need it most.

Love

1 Corinthians 13:4

Choosing the good of others, even when it costs you, the way Christ loves you.

Joy

Nehemiah 8:10

A deep gladness in God that holds steady when circumstances don't.

Peace

John 14:27

A settled trust in God that guards your heart when life is uncertain.

Patience

James 5:7

Waiting on God's timing without giving up, and bearing with people who test you.

Kindness

Ephesians 4:32

Tender, practical care for others, even when they haven't earned it.

Goodness

Micah 6:8

Doing what is right and generous, whether or not anyone is watching.

Faithfulness

Luke 16:10

Being dependable: keeping your word, finishing what you start, and sticking with God and people.

Gentleness

Proverbs 15:1

Strength handled with care, answering harshness with a calm and humble spirit.

Self-Control

Proverbs 25:28

Saying no to what harms and yes to what honors God, with the Spirit's help.

When You Stumble

Christians still sin, but God forgives when we confess and helps us fight temptation.

THIS WEEK

The Weight of Silence

READ FIRST: **Psalm 32:1-5**

Carrying a secret wears a person down. You tell yourself it's handled, but it follows you to work, to the supper table, and into the dark at three in the morning. Hiding sin is exhausting.

King David knew that weight. In Psalm 32 he describes a season when he kept silent about his sin. He felt it in his bones. He groaned all day long. God's hand was heavy on him day and night, and his strength dried up like a field in the summer heat. That heaviness was not God rejecting him. It was God refusing to let him stay hidden.

Then David stopped hiding. He acknowledged his sin, and God forgave the guilt of it. When David quit covering his sin, God covered it with forgiveness. No wonder the psalm opens with a shout of relief about the one "whose sin is covered!"

If you have trusted Christ, you belong to God, and your salvation rests on what Jesus has done, not on your record since. But you will still sin. When you do, you don't need to hide, and you don't need to be saved all over again. This week's memory verse promises that when we confess, God forgives and cleanses us. To confess means to agree with God about what you did, without excuses. It isn't groveling to earn forgiveness; Jesus has already paid for it. This week you will also look at resisting temptation, making things right with people you have hurt, and forgiving others as God has forgiven you.

Put It Into Practice

Set aside fifteen quiet minutes this week. Read Psalm 32 slowly, then ask God to show you anything you have been hiding. Confess it to Him plainly, without excuses. Then read 1 John 1:9 aloud and thank Him that you are forgiven.

Memory Verse

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Shame keeps many new believers from admitting they have stumbled, and some start to wonder whether they were ever really saved. Listen without shock. Remind your friend that their standing with God rests on Christ, not on their record, and share how confession has worked in your own life.

When You Meet

- ① When you sin now, what is your first instinct: hide it, excuse it, punish yourself, or bring it to God?
- ② What makes it hard for you to admit you're wrong, whether to God or to other people?
- ③ What temptations are strongest for you in this season? How can your mentor pray for you?

Prayer

Father, thank You that I don't have to hide from You. When I sin, help me come to You quickly and honestly. Thank You that Jesus paid for every sin, and that You are faithful to forgive. Amen.

DAY 1

No More Pretending

Read: 1 John 1:8-10 Go further: Romans 7:18-19

If we say, "We have no sin," we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8

John wrote this letter to Christians, not to outsiders. Some people expect that once they trust Christ, sin will simply disappear. When it doesn't, they either panic or pretend. John closes both doors. Pretending you don't sin is self-deception, and claiming you never have calls God a liar. But the answer isn't despair either. When we confess, God is faithful and righteous to forgive and cleanse us, because Jesus has already paid for those sins. Even the apostle Paul admitted that he didn't always do the good he wanted to do. You are not a failed Christian. You are a forgiven one, still growing.

RESPOND Use the word bank to unpack this week's memory verse, 1 John 1:9.

Word bank: cleanse faithful confess righteous

1. To _____ my sin is to agree with God about it, without excuses.
2. God is _____: He always keeps His promise to forgive.
3. God is _____ to forgive, because Jesus already paid for my sin.
4. To _____ is to wash something completely clean.

KEY TRUTH

No pretending, no despair: when I confess, God forgives and cleanses.

PRAY: Father, I still sin, and I don't want to pretend otherwise. Thank You that Jesus paid for it all. Keep me honest with You and quick to confess. Amen.

DAY 2

Look for the Exit

Read: 1 Corinthians 10:13 Go further: Hebrews 2:18

...with the temptation he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to bear it. 1 Corinthians 10:13

Temptation can feel like your own private battle. Paul says otherwise. What you face is "common to humanity." You are not a special case, and you are not alone. God is faithful, and He sets limits on how far temptation can go. People sometimes use this verse to say God won't give you more than you can handle, but it is about temptation, not hardship. The promise is that you will never be cornered into sin. The exit might be walking away, making a phone call, deleting an app, or praying on the spot. Jesus was tempted too, and He knows how to help.

RESPOND Name your exits. List three practical ways out you can take the next time temptation hits.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

KEY TRUTH

God is faithful. Temptation will never corner me without a way out.

PRAY: Faithful God, when temptation comes, open my eyes to the way out and give me the will to take it. Thank You that Jesus understands. Amen.

DAY 3

A Line Drawn Early

Read: Daniel 1:8-16 Go further: Psalm 119:9-11

Daniel determined that he would not defile himself with the king's food or with the wine he drank. Daniel 1:8

Daniel was a young man when he was carried off to Babylon, given a new name, and trained to serve the king. Everything around him pushed him to blend in. But Daniel's mind was made up before the pressure peaked. And he handled it respectfully and creatively. He didn't stage a showdown. He asked for a ten-day test of vegetables and water, and God gave him favor with the officials. By the end, Daniel and his friends looked healthier than the rest. Decisions made in the heat of the moment usually go badly. Decide now where your lines are, and plan how to keep them.

RESPOND *Decide now. Plan how you will respond to pressures you know are coming.*

When this happens...	I will...

KEY TRUTH

I decide where my lines are before the pressure comes.

PRAY: Lord, give me Daniel's courage and wisdom. Help me settle my convictions now, and keep them with respect and grace when the pressure comes. Amen.

DAY 4

Whiter Than Snow

Read: Psalm 51:1-12 Go further: 2 Samuel 12:1-13

God, create a clean heart for me and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

David wrote Psalm 51 after the prophet Nathan confronted him about his adultery with Bathsheba and his plot to have her husband killed. Notice what he doesn't do. He doesn't blame anyone, shrink the sin, or promise to earn his way back. He appeals to God's faithful love and abundant compassion. He names his sin honestly and admits it was against God first of all. Then he asks God to do what only God can do: make his heart new and restore his joy. David still faced hard consequences, but his fellowship with God was restored. If God forgave David, your sin is not beyond His mercy.

RESPOND *Write your own short prayer of confession. Borrow words from Psalm 51 if they help.*

KEY TRUTH

God's mercy is bigger than my worst sin.

PRAY: God, be gracious to me according to Your faithful love. Wash me clean, make my heart new, and restore to me the joy of Your salvation. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: What helps you confess sin quickly instead of hiding it? What has confession been like for you?

DAY 5

Before You Bring Your Gift

Read: Matthew 5:23-24 Go further: Luke 19:1-10

First go and be reconciled with your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:24

In Jesus' day, worshipers brought offerings to the altar at the temple. Picture someone who has traveled for days with a gift for God, then remembers that a brother or sister has something against them. God cares about how we treat each other so much that He puts it ahead of the offering. Being reconciled means doing your part to restore what is broken: owning your wrong, apologizing without excuses, and repaying what you can, as Zacchaeus the tax collector did. You can't control how the other person responds. If contact would be unsafe, talk with Pastor James first. But you can take the first step.

RESPOND *Who do you need to make things right with? Write their initials and one first step.*

KEY TRUTH

Worship and reconciliation go together, so I take the first step toward peace.

PRAY: Lord, show me anyone I have wronged. Give me humility to own my part, courage to take the first step, and wisdom to do it well. Amen.

DAY 6

Forgiven People Forgive

Read: Colossians 3:13 Go further: Matthew 18:21-35

Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive. Colossians 3:13

Peter once asked Jesus whether forgiving someone seven times was enough. Jesus answered with a number meant to end the counting. Forgiveness is hard when the hurt runs deep: a parent who wasn't there, a marriage that ended, a friend who betrayed you. Forgiving doesn't mean saying it was okay, pretending it didn't hurt, or trusting someone who is still unsafe. It means letting go of your right to get even and handing the matter to God. It is often a process, not one moment. If someone is harming you now, get safe first and tell someone you trust. And remember how much you have been forgiven.

RESPOND *Is there someone you are struggling to forgive? Write their initials and an honest prayer about it.*

KEY TRUTH

I forgive others because God has forgiven me so much.

PRAY: Lord, You have forgiven me more than I can measure. Help me release those who hurt me into Your hands, and heal what they broke. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: Have you ever forgiven someone who never apologized? How did God help you do it?

Getting Back Up

Every believer stumbles. What matters is what you do next. Keep this page handy for the days you fall, and walk through these steps with God. If a sin has a strong grip on you, don't fight it alone. Tell your mentor or Pastor James.

— Run to God, Not Away

Shame tells you to hide until you feel worthy again. Don't wait. Your welcome rests on Jesus, not on how well you have done lately.

— Name It Honestly

Confess specifically, without excuses or blaming others. Agree with God about what you did and why it was wrong.

— Receive His Forgiveness

Read 1 John 1:9 again and take God at His word. Forgiven means forgiven. You don't have to punish yourself to make it stick.

— Make It Right

If you hurt someone, apologize and repair what you can. If contact would be unsafe, ask Pastor James for help first.

— Guard the Gate

Ask what led up to the fall. Were you tired, lonely, angry, or bored? Plan an exit for next time, and read Ephesians 6:10-18 about the armor God gives you.

— My Plan for Next Time

When I am tempted in this area, I will:

Open Hands

Everything you have comes from God, so you can give freely and gladly, trusting Him to provide.

THIS WEEK

What Jesus Noticed

READ FIRST: **Mark 12:41-44**

Jesus sat down across from the offering boxes in the temple and watched people give. Wealthy worshipers dropped in large amounts. Then a poor widow came and dropped in two tiny coins, worth almost nothing. In that day, a widow often had no income and no safety net. Most people would not have noticed her. Jesus did.

He called His disciples over and told them this widow had given more than all the others. They had given out of their surplus, what they could easily spare. She had given out of her poverty: everything she had, all she had to live on. By any accountant's math, she gave the least. By heaven's math, she gave the most.

Jesus measures a gift not by its size but by what it costs the giver and the trust behind it. The widow wasn't buying God's favor, and Jesus wasn't telling everyone to empty their bank accounts. She simply trusted God with all she had, and her gift showed it. Giving isn't how we earn God's love. It is one way we answer it.

This week you'll look at what the Bible says about money and possessions: everything belongs to God, giving first is an act of trust, God loves a cheerful giver, and treasure stored in heaven lasts. You will also see that your time and abilities are gifts you can offer, not just your money. A healthy fruit tree doesn't keep its fruit for itself. Whether you have much or little, generosity is part of the fruit God grows in His people. After all, He gave us His Son.

Put It Into Practice

Decide on one step of generosity this week. You might start giving regularly through your church, raise your giving a little, or quietly meet someone's need. Pray about it first, then do it gladly, and tell your mentor how it went.

Memory Verse

Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:7

- ☐ Memorized
☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Money is a tender subject. Your friend may be carrying debt, living paycheck to paycheck, or coming from a church that pressured people to give. Listen first. Share honestly how you learned to give, and help them take one step of trust without guilt or comparison.

When You Meet

- 1 What did you learn about money growing up? How does that shape the way you handle it now?
- 2 What makes giving hard for you: fear of not having enough, past pressure, or something else?
- 3 What would one step of trust in your giving look like for you this month?

Prayer

Generous Father, everything I have comes from You, and You gave Your Son for me. Free me from fear and greed. Give me open hands and a cheerful heart, and teach me to trust You as my provider. Amen.

DAY 1

Owner or Manager?

Read: Psalm 24:1-2 Go further: Haggai 2:8

The earth and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants, belong to the LORD... Psalm 24:1

We talk about my house, my truck, my money, and my time. Psalm 24 corrects the grammar. Because God made the world, it all belongs to Him, and so do you. That makes you a steward: someone who manages what belongs to another. Stewards aren't owners, but they aren't bystanders either. They are trusted with real responsibility. This changes how you see your income, your home, your abilities, and your hours. It also brings relief. If everything is God's, then holding your whole life together isn't yours to carry alone. Your job is to manage what He has entrusted to you, faithfully and for Him.

RESPOND *What has God placed in your care? How could you manage each thing for Him?*

Entrusted to me	How I'll manage it for God

KEY TRUTH

Everything I have belongs to God. I am a steward, not an owner.

PRAY: Lord, the earth and everything in it are Yours, including me. Help me hold what I have with open hands and manage it faithfully for You. Amen.

DAY 2

First, Not Leftovers

Read: Proverbs 3:9-10 Go further: Malachi 3:10

Honor the LORD with your possessions and with the first produce of your entire harvest... Proverbs 3:9

In ancient Israel, farmers brought the first part of the harvest to God before they knew how big the rest would be. That took faith. Giving first still says, Lord, You come before everything else, and I trust You to provide. Many Christians give a tithe, one tenth of their income, through their local church. If that feels out of reach, start with a regular amount you can give gladly, and grow from there. Proverbs are wise sayings about how life usually goes under God's care, not get-rich guarantees. God promises to provide for His children, not to make them wealthy. Giving first is about trust.

RESPOND *What would it look like for God to get your first, not your leftovers, this month? Be specific.*

KEY TRUTH

Giving to God first is a way of trusting Him most.

PRAY: Lord, You deserve my first and best, not my leftovers. Help me trust You enough to give first, believing You will provide what I need. Amen.

DAY 3

Glad, Not Grudging

Read: 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 Go further: Acts 20:35

And God is able to make every grace overflow to you, so that in every way, always having everything you need, you may excel in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8

Paul was gathering an offering for poor believers in Jerusalem, and he wanted the gift from the church in Corinth to be real. He gives three principles. First, giving is like sowing seed: a farmer who plants sparingly harvests sparingly. Second, decide in your heart ahead of time what you will give, not reluctantly and not because someone is pressuring you. Third, “God loves a cheerful giver.” Giving to impress people or to quiet guilt misses the point. The harvest God promises isn’t a fatter bank account but enough grace for every good work. Giving because He has been generous to you brings real joy.

RESPOND Do you tend to give reluctantly, under pressure, or gladly? What would help you give more cheerfully?

KEY TRUTH

God wants my giving to be glad and freely chosen, not forced.

PRAY: Father, You have been so generous to me. Take away my reluctance and fear, and make me a glad giver who trusts You to provide. Amen.

DAY 4

Who Am I to Give?

Read: 1 Chronicles 29:10-14 Go further: 1 Peter 4:10

For everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your own hand. 1 Chronicles 29:14

King David had gathered materials for the temple his son Solomon would build, and the people gave wholeheartedly. David could have taken the credit. Instead, he stood before the whole assembly and praised God. Greatness, power, glory, and the kingdom all belong to Him. Riches and honor come from Him. Then David asked a humble question: who are we, that we get to give like this? Giving isn’t doing God a favor. It is returning a portion of what He first gave us. And it isn’t only about money. Your time and your abilities are His gifts too, and He can use all three.

RESPOND Write one or two ways you could offer each of these to God this month.

My time	My abilities	My money and things

KEY TRUTH

When I give, I am only returning what God first gave me.

PRAY: Lord, everything comes from You. Thank You for the time, abilities, and resources You have given me. Show me how to offer them back gladly. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor: How do you decide how to give your time, abilities, and money? What has giving taught you?

DAY 5

Where Your Heart Goes

Read: Matthew 6:19-21 Go further: 1 Timothy 6:17-19

But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves don't break in and steal. Matthew 6:20

Jesus' listeners knew how fragile wealth could be. Moths ruined fine clothes, rust ate metal, and thieves dug through walls. Our treasures are different but just as fragile. Trucks get wrecked, savings rise and fall, and houses need new roofs. Earthly things aren't evil, but they don't last, and they can't hold your heart safely. Of your treasure, Jesus says, "there your heart will be also." Where your money and time go, your affections follow. Treasure in heaven is stored up by loving God and people: giving generously, serving faithfully, and helping others come to know Jesus. That treasure is safe forever.

RESPOND Look at where your money and time went this past week. What do they say about what you treasure?

KEY TRUTH

My heart follows my treasure, so I want to invest in what lasts.

PRAY: Jesus, loosen my grip on things that rust and fade. Be my greatest treasure, and teach me to invest in what lasts forever. Amen.

DAY 6

A Gift Too Great for Words

Read: 2 Corinthians 9:11-15 Go further: Psalm 107:1

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15

Paul pictures what happens when believers give. Struggling Christians get what they need. The people who receive help thank God. They pray for the givers and feel real affection for them. One act of generosity sets off a chain of gratitude that ends in praise to God. Then Paul bursts out with thanks for God's own gift. He means Jesus, God's gift to us, too great to put into words. That is where all Christian giving begins. We don't give to get God's attention. We give because He has already given us His Son. A heart that remembers the cross can't stay tight-fisted for long.

RESPOND Write a short thank-you to God for His gift of Jesus. What does that gift mean to you today?

KEY TRUTH

My giving is a thank-you for God's greatest gift, Jesus.

PRAY: Thank You, God, for Jesus, Your gift beyond words. Let my gratitude overflow into generosity, so others see Your grace and thank You too. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Talk with a Christian friend: When has someone's generosity moved you to thank God? Share your stories.

Making a Giving Plan

This week's memory verse says to decide in your heart what you will give. A plan helps you decide ahead of time, so giving becomes a glad habit instead of an afterthought. Work through this page, then talk it over with your mentor.

— Start With Thanks

Giving grows out of gratitude. List three ways God has provided for you recently.

— Choose an Amount

Many Christians give a tithe, one tenth of their income. If that is out of reach right now, choose a percentage you can give gladly and plan to grow it. My regular gift will be:

— Give First

Set your gift aside as soon as money comes in, so it doesn't get lost among other spending. Then give it regularly through your church.

— Where Your Offering Goes

Ask Pastor James how PGBC uses its offerings. Gifts like yours help the church:

- Teach God's Word to people of every age
- Care for people in need in and around Ronda
- Support missionaries who share the gospel around the world

— If Money Is Tight

If you are in debt or barely making ends meet, you are not alone, and God is not asking you to be reckless. Give what you can, and ask your mentor to help you make a budget.

— My First Step

Write one step you will take this month:

Go Home and Tell

God uses ordinary people like you to share the good news of what Jesus has done.

THIS WEEK

One Sentence Changed Everything

READ FIRST: **2 Kings 5:1-14**

Naaman commanded the army of Aram, a neighboring kingdom. He had rank, his king's respect, and a string of victories. He also had a skin disease that no amount of status could cure.

In his house lived a young girl from Israel. Raiders had carried her away from her home, and now she served Naaman's wife. She had every reason to be bitter. Instead, she spoke one sentence of hope. If only her master could meet God's prophet in Samaria, she said, he would be cured. Her words traveled from the household all the way to the king.

Naaman set out with silver, gold, and a letter from his king, and eventually stood at the door of Elisha, the prophet who spoke for God. Elisha didn't even come out. He sent a messenger with simple instructions: wash seven times in the Jordan River. Naaman was insulted and stormed off, until his servants reasoned with him. He went down to the river, dipped seven times, and his skin became like a small boy's. God's grace came through humble people and a humble command.

You carry better news than that girl did. Jesus heals what no one else can: the sin that separates us from God. This week you'll see why people need to hear, how to tell your own story, how to live so others notice, where courage comes from, and how big God's plan really is. It is a fitting way to finish Deep Roots, because healthy fruit always carries seed for the next planting. You don't have to be important or polished. You just need to tell what the Lord has done for you.

Put It Into Practice

Write down three people who don't yet follow Jesus, and pray for them by name every day. Then invite one of them to Sunday School at 9:45 AM, worship at 11:00 AM, or Wednesday Bible study at 6:00 PM. Offer a ride or save them a seat.

Memory Verse

Go home to your own people, and report to them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you.

Mark 5:19

- ☐ Memorized
- ☐ Shared it with someone

For Your Mentor

Many new believers feel unqualified to share their faith, especially with family who knew them before. Help your friend put their story into a few honest sentences. As this guide ends, celebrate how far they have come, and help them talk with Pastor James about next steps like baptism and church membership.

When You Meet

- 1 Who first told you about Jesus? What did they say or do that made a difference?
- 2 What makes you hesitant to talk about your faith? Which of those fears feels most real?
- 3 Name two or three people you would love to see come to know Jesus. How can we pray for them?

Prayer

Lord, thank You for the people who told me about Jesus. Give me courage and love to tell others what You have done for me, and open the hearts of the people I am praying for. Amen.

DAY 1

Someone Has to Tell Them

Read: Romans 10:13-15 Go further: Romans 1:16

How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher? **Romans 10:14**

Paul begins with a wide-open promise: everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Everyone. No record is too long, and no one is too far gone. Then he traces the chain backward, and the point is plain: no one can trust a Savior they have never heard about. God sends messengers. Somebody told you, whether a friend, a relative, a preacher, or a coworker on a lunch break. Now you are part of that chain. Paul says the feet of those who bring good news are beautiful. That includes tired feet in work boots. God can use yours.

RESPOND *Who do you hope will come to know Jesus? Write names or initials, and pray for them daily.*

In my family: _____

At work or school: _____

Friend or neighbor: _____

KEY TRUTH

Someone told me about Jesus. Now God sends me to tell others.

PRAY: Lord, thank You for sending someone to tell me about Jesus. Open the hearts of the people on my list, and give me an opening to share. Amen.

DAY 2

Your Story, Simply Told

Read: Mark 5:18-20 Go further: 1 Peter 3:15

So he went out and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and they were all amazed.
Mark 5:20

This man had lived among the tombs, tormented by demons. Jesus set him free in a single encounter. No wonder he begged to climb into the boat and go wherever Jesus went. But Jesus said no and gave him a different assignment: “Go home to your own people” and tell them how much the Lord had done and how He had shown mercy. The people who had seen him at his worst would be the first to see the change. You don’t need theology training or all the answers. You just need to tell, honestly and simply, what Jesus has done for you.

RESPOND *Outline your story in three short parts. Keep it honest, simple, and under two minutes.*

Before Christ: _____

How I trusted Him: _____

What’s different now: _____

KEY TRUTH

I don’t need all the answers to tell my story.

PRAY: Jesus, You have had mercy on me. Give me courage to tell my own people what You have done, starting with those who knew me before. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Tell your story to your mentor in two or three minutes. Then ask them to tell you theirs.

DAY 3

Stars on a Dark Night

Read: Philippians 2:14-16 Go further: Matthew 5:14-16

Do everything without grumbling and arguing, so that you may be blameless and pure, children of God...

Philippians 2:14-15

Away from town lights, the night sky over the Blue Ridge fills with stars. The darker the sky, the brighter they look. Paul says believers “shine like stars in the world” by living differently in a crooked culture and holding firmly to the word of life, the good news about Jesus. That doesn’t mean being loud or preachy. It looks like doing your work without complaining, staying out of the gossip, telling the truth when a lie would be easier, and staying kind under pressure. People around you are watching how a Christian handles stress and conflict. Your life can make them curious about your Lord.

RESPOND Which of these could you practice this week where people know you? Check two or three.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Do my work without complaining | ☐ Stay out of gossip and put-downs |
| ☐ Tell the truth when it costs me | ☐ Stay patient in a tense conversation |
| ☐ Thank someone who is usually overlooked | ☐ Mention my faith or church naturally |
| ☐ Invite someone to church | ☐ _____ |

KEY TRUTH

My everyday conduct can make people curious about Jesus.

PRAY: Lord, let my words and attitude shine for You at home and everywhere I go. Keep me from grumbling, and hold me fast to Your Word. Amen.

DAY 4

Where Boldness Comes From

Read: Acts 4:18-20 Go further: Acts 4:23-31

...we are unable to stop speaking about what we have seen and heard. **Acts 4:20**

The same council that had handed Jesus over to be crucified now ordered Peter and John never to speak or teach in His name again. Not long before, Peter had been so afraid that he denied even knowing Jesus. Now the two of them answered boldly: judge for yourselves whether it is right to listen to you rather than to God. What changed? They had seen the risen Jesus, and the Holy Spirit had filled them. Your fear may be about awkwardness, not arrest. But the same Spirit lives in you. Courage doesn’t wait for fear to leave. It speaks anyway and trusts God with the results.

RESPOND What fear keeps you quiet about Jesus? Name it honestly, then ask God for the courage you need.

KEY TRUTH

The Spirit who made Peter bold lives in me too.

PRAY: Holy Spirit, You know what makes me afraid to speak up. Fill me with courage and love, and give me the right words at the right time. Amen.

DAY 5

A Crowd No One Can Count

Read: Revelation 7:9-10 Go further: Matthew 28:18-20

After this I looked, and there was a vast multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, which no one could number, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. Revelation 7:9

Near the end of the Bible, God gives the apostle John a glimpse of worship in heaven. The people wear white robes, a picture of being made clean, and wave palm branches like a victory parade. With one loud voice they declare, “Salvation belongs to our God,” and to the Lamb, a name for Jesus, the sacrifice for our sin. That is where history is headed. It also shows God’s heart for the whole world, including peoples who have never heard of Jesus. Missionaries go to them, and churches like ours send and support them through prayer and giving. You get a part in that story.

RESPOND *Pick a nation or people group to pray for this week. Write its name and a short prayer.*

KEY TRUTH

God is gathering worshipers from every nation, and I get to help.

PRAY: Lord, You love every nation and language. Send workers to those who haven’t heard, and show me my part through praying, giving, and telling. Amen.

DAY 6

Rooted for the Long Haul

Read: Colossians 2:6-7 Go further: Philippians 3:12-14

...being rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing with gratitude. Colossians 2:7

This is the last day of Deep Roots. Look back at what God has done: forgiveness you didn’t earn, a family of believers you didn’t expect, and habits that are starting to take hold. This guide’s theme verse shows what comes next. You received Christ Jesus as Lord by grace, through faith. Keep walking in Him the same way. Trees don’t grow in ninety days. They grow over a lifetime, one season at a time. So stay in God’s Word, keep praying, and stay close to your church family. The God who began this work in you will finish it.

RESPOND *Flip back to Week 1. What has God changed in you since then? What is your next step?*

KEY TRUTH

I’ll keep walking with Christ the way I began: by grace, through faith.

PRAY: Lord Jesus, thank You for every step of these ninety days. Keep my roots deep in You. Build me up, hold me steady, and make my life overflow with thanks. Amen.

TALK IT OVER: Ask your mentor what growth they have seen in you. Then talk about your next steps and thank God together.

Looking Back, Pressing On

You have finished Deep Roots. Before you set this guide on the shelf, take some time to look back at what God has done and to look ahead at what comes next. Share your answers with your mentor or Pastor James.

— What God Has Done

What has changed in you over these ninety days, big or small?

— A Verse to Keep

Write out a memory verse from this guide that you want to carry with you.

— Questions I Still Have

Write them down. No question is too basic to ask.

— Who Helped Me Grow

Write their names, and thank each of them this week.

— Next Steps

- Keep a daily time in God's Word. Try reading Mark, one chapter a day.
- If you haven't been baptized since trusting Christ, talk with Pastor James.
- Ask Pastor James about church membership and where you can serve.
- Keep meeting with your mentor, and someday walk alongside someone newer than you.
- Try Follow Me next, a 90-day walk through the life of Jesus.

Memory Verse Challenge

Check a box each time you can say a verse from memory: **1** to someone at home, **2** to your mentor or Pastor James, and **3** a month later, to be sure it has stuck.

		1	2	3
1	2 Corinthians 5:17 — Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!	☐	☐	☐
2	John 10:28 — I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand.	☐	☐	☐
3	Psalms 100:3 — Acknowledge that the LORD is God. He made us, and we are his—his people, the sheep of his pasture.	☐	☐	☐
4	2 Timothy 3:16-17 — All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.	☐	☐	☐
5	Psalms 119:105 — Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path.	☐	☐	☐
6	Philippians 4:6 — Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.	☐	☐	☐
7	Proverbs 3:5-6 — Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight.	☐	☐	☐
8	1 Corinthians 12:27 — Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it.	☐	☐	☐
9	Romans 6:4 — Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.	☐	☐	☐
10	Psalms 95:6 — Come, let's worship and bow down; let's kneel before the LORD our Maker.	☐	☐	☐
11	1 Peter 4:10 — Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.	☐	☐	☐
12	Galatians 5:22-23 — But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things.	☐	☐	☐
13	1 John 1:9 — If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.	☐	☐	☐
14	2 Corinthians 9:7 — Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver.	☐	☐	☐
15	Mark 5:19 — Go home to your own people, and report to them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you.	☐	☐	☐

✂ Memory Verse Cards

Cut these out and keep them in your Bible, on the fridge, or in your car.

WEEK 1

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17

WEEK 2

I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand.

John 10:28

WEEK 3

Acknowledge that the LORD is God. He made us, and we are his—his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Psalms 100:3

WEEK 4

All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

WEEK 5

Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light on my path.

Psalms 119:105

WEEK 6

Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Philippians 4:6

WEEK 7

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding; in all your ways know him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5-6

WEEK 8

Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it.

1 Corinthians 12:27

✂ Memory Verse Cards

Cut these out and keep them in your Bible, on the fridge, or in your car.

💧 WEEK 9

Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too may walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:4

🎵 WEEK 10

Come, let's worship and bow down; let's kneel before the LORD our Maker.

Psalms 95:6

👉 WEEK 11

Just as each one has received a gift, use it to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.

1 Peter 4:10

🌿 WEEK 12

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things.

Galatians 5:22-23

🛡 WEEK 13

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

👤 WEEK 14

Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:7

🏠 WEEK 15

Go home to your own people, and report to them how much the Lord has done for you and how he has had mercy on you.

Mark 5:19

♥ MY FAVORITE VERSE

Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Preacher: _____

Bible passage: _____

Sermon title:

🎯 The main point

Notes

Verses to remember

Questions to ask

How I will respond this week

Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Preacher: _____

Bible passage:

Sermon title:

The main point

Notes

Verses to remember

❓ Questions to ask

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The main point

Notes

Verses to remember

❓ Questions to ask

How I will respond this week

Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Preacher: _____

Bible passage:

Sermon title:

🎯 The main point

Notes

Verses to remember

❓ Questions to ask

How I will respond this week

ROOT Bible Study

Use these four steps with any passage of Scripture. Print more copies of this page anytime.

Date: _____

I read: _____

R

Read it

Read the passage slowly, twice, and aloud if you can. Note anything that stands out.

O

Observe

What happens in the passage? What does it reveal about God, about Jesus, and about people?

O

Own it

What is God calling you to believe, change, or do?

T

Talk to God

Write a prayer in response: thanks, confession, and requests for help.

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Use these four steps with any passage of Scripture. Print more copies of this page anytime.

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O

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What is God calling you to believe, change, or do?

T

Talk to God

Write a prayer in response: thanks, confession, and requests for help.

The Good News

Five truths at the heart of the gospel, each with a verse. Learn them well enough to explain them in your own words.

- 1 God loves you.**
God created you, knows you fully, and loves you with a love you could never earn.
*"For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." **John 3:16***
- 2 Sin separates.**
All of us have sinned. We have gone our own way instead of God's, and our sin separates us from Him.
*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." **Romans 3:23***
- 3 Jesus saves.**
Jesus, the Son of God, died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin, and He rose again.
*"But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." **Romans 5:8***
- 4 Trust Him.**
Salvation is God's gift. We receive it by turning from our sin and trusting Jesus as Savior and Lord.
*"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." **Romans 10:9***
- 5 Follow Him.**
The Christian life is a new life of following Jesus, day by day, with His Spirit and His church.
*"So then, just as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to walk in him." **Colossians 2:6***

Your story in three parts

My life before Christ...

How I came to trust Him...

What has changed...

Have you trusted Jesus?

If you're not sure, or you'd like to talk about it, Pastor James Safrit would be glad to meet with you. Call (336) 984-3360.

What's Next?

Ninety days is a real beginning. Here's how to keep growing:



Keep meeting with God every day.

Read the Gospel of Mark, one chapter a day. Mark is the shortest Gospel and a good place to keep reading every day. Check off each chapter:

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16



Take your next step: baptism.

If you haven't been baptized since you trusted Christ, talk with Pastor James Safrit about baptism and church membership.



Worship with your church family.

Sunday School: Sundays, 9:45 AM · Worship: Sundays, 11:00 AM · Bible Study: Wednesdays, 6:00 PM.



Try Follow Me next.

It's a 90-day walk through the life of Jesus. Download it free at pgbcronda.com/resources.



Keep meeting with someone.

Keep meeting with your mentor, or ask the church to connect you with a small group.



Share your story.

Use The Good News page to tell a friend or family member what Christ has done for you.

Answer Key

Week 3: Getting to Know God

Day 6: adopted; gave; lives; one

Week 9: Two Pictures of the Gospel

Day 2: gift; sin; accepted; save

Week 13: When You Stumble

Day 1: confess; faithful; righteous; cleanse

Sermon Notes

Date: _____

Preacher: _____

Bible passage:

Sermon title:

🎯 The main point

Notes

Verses to remember

❓ Questions to ask

How I will respond this week



Deep Roots is one of the **Growing in the Grove** guides—free resources from Pleasant Grove Baptist Church for adults who are new in Christ.

Sunday School · Sundays, 9:45 AM

Worship · Sundays, 11:00 AM

Bible Study · Wednesdays, 6:00 PM

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pgbcronda.com/resources