

ROOTED COMPANION GUIDE





ROOTED

Spring 2026

Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30pm | Sundays, 9-10:50am

OUR GROUP'S ROOM:

WEEK 1- KICKOFF- February 10 | February 10 & 15

WEEK 2- February 17 | February 22

WEEK 3- February 24 | March 1

WEEK 4- March 3 | March 8

WEEK 5- March 10 | March 15

WEEK 6- March 17 | March 22

WEEK 7- March 24 | March 29

BREAK FOR EASTER- NO Meetings March 31 | April 5

WEEK 8- April 7 | April 12

WEEK 9- PARTNERSHIP CLASS- April 14 | April 19

WEEK 10- April 21 | April 26

WEEK 11- CELEBRATION- Saturday, May 2 at 4:30pm

PRAYER EXPERIENCE DATE/TIME/PLACE:

SERVE EXPERIENCE DATE/TIME/PLACE:

WELCOME TO ROOTED

The Rooted Companion Guide is here to support your journey through Rooted. It works alongside your Rooted Workbook, helping you stay oriented, know what to focus on each week, and come prepared for meaningful group conversation.

Think of this guide as a weekly companion, not another assignment.

WHAT TO EXPECT EACH WEEK

Start with the Weekly Overview

Each week begins with a short overview that introduces the theme and helps you see the bigger picture of what you'll be exploring. Taking a moment to read this first can help frame your week and bring intention to your time.

Follow the Daily Work

You'll engage with Rooted five days a week. Your Companion Guide will clearly point you to:

- What to read
- Where to read it (Rooted Workbook or Companion Guide)
- When to watch a video or engage a special experience

Some weeks, most of your reading will be in the Rooted Workbook. Other weeks, it will be primarily in this Companion Guide or a mix of both.

Every week will include an invitation to respond to reflection questions for the week which are located in this guide.

Pause and Reflect

Throughout the week, you'll be invited to slow down, reflect, and listen for where God might be speaking. These moments aren't about having the right answers; they're about paying attention to what God may be stirring in you.

Prepare for Group Time

At the end of each week, you'll find Final Reflections in this guide. These questions help you look back over the week and come ready to share what stood out to you—whether that's an insight, a question, or an invitation you sensed from God.

ROOTED MATERIALS



You've been given two books for your Rooted journey: a **Rooted Workbook** and a **Rooted Companion Guide**.

The Rooted Workbook contains much of the core Rooted content, including daily readings, devotionals, and questions you'll engage with throughout the week. Depending on the week, readings and reflections may be found in the Companion Guide.

If you've gone through Rooted in the past, you may notice a few new elements this time. Based on what we've learned over the years, we've added some supplemental content unique to The Creek that introduces our mission, vision, and priorities and helps lay a strong foundation for covenant community in Life Groups. We recognize that moving between the Rooted Workbook, Companion Guide, and website may feel a bit cumbersome at times, but we believe this rhythm creates a richer, more integrated experience. In many ways, this mirrors how groups will continue to engage resources, Scripture, and practices once they launch as a Life Group.



For a week-by-week breakdown of content and frequently asked questions, scan the QR code here or go to:

thecreek.org/rooted/learn-more

A FEW HELPFUL REMINDERS

- Rooted is a journey, not a checklist. Some weeks will feel rich and clear; others may feel slower or harder. Both are part of the process.
- There's no pressure to get it "right." Come as you are. Be honest about what you're noticing, questioning, or carrying.
- Share at your own pace. The group covenant creates a safe space, but you are always invited—not required—to share.
- God is the one at work. Rooted provides structure and shared practices, but growth and transformation are guided by the Holy Spirit.

A FINAL WORD

As you use both the Rooted Workbook and this Companion Guide, our prayer is that you would find space to slow down, listen, and notice how God is meeting you—through Scripture, reflection, prayer, and community.

WELCOME

ROOTED WEEK 1 | WHAT IS A LIFE GROUP?

WELCOME TO ROOTED!

We're so glad you're here! Thank you for taking this step of faith and choosing to join a Life Group. Whether this is your first group experience or you've been part of one before, our hope is that this group becomes a place where you feel known, supported, and encouraged as you grow in your relationship with Jesus and with one another.

Over the next 11 weeks, your engagement with the discussions and experiences of Rooted will welcome God to work in your life as the foundation of your Life Group is formed. When Rooted concludes, your group will continue to meet as a Life Group.

WHAT TO EXPECT THIS WEEK:

- Begin getting to know one another
- Understand what you can expect throughout Rooted
- Explore what a Life Group is and how Rooted sets the foundation for group life
- Review and sign the Rooted Covenant

WHAT IS A LIFE GROUP?

A Life Group is a community of disciples intent on loving God, loving others, and making disciples in order to connect people to Jesus.

Commitment to a Life Group is a spiritual discipline, a commitment to your formation into Christ's likeness. Our journey with Christ is not meant to be traveled alone. We need others to encourage us, pray for us, and remind us who God is and how being created in His image informs our identity. Through Rooted, you'll begin cultivating the rhythms, trust, and shared experiences that will shape your group going forward.

WHAT LIFE GROUPS DO:

Life Groups typically...

- Gather weekly in one another's homes
- Spend time in Scripture, prayer, and discussion
- Pursue lives of abiding in Christ that reflect the fruit of the Spirit
- Care for and pray for one another
- Serve together in the community
- Share meals, laughter, and meaningful conversation

During week 10, you'll be invited to spend time examining the Life Group Covenant and prayerfully deciding if you're prepared to make the commitment to covenant community through your Life Group.



DURING ROOTED, YOUR GROUP WILL PARTICIPATE IN:

- Weekly Discussion based on reading and work found in the Companion Guide and Rooted Workbook.
- A Prayer Experience
 - Scheduled by your group outside of normal Rooted meetings.
 - Children's programming NOT provided.
- A Serve Experience
 - Scheduled by The Creek outside of normal Rooted meetings during April 11-18
 - Children's programming NOT provided although some ministry partners welcome the participation of children.
- The Creek Partnership Class
 - Tuesday, April 14 or Sunday, April 19
 - Children's programming provided.
- Rooted Celebration
 - Saturday, May 2, 4:30-7:30pm
 - Children's programming provided.

ROOTED RHYTHMS

Engaging in and practicing the Rhythms of Rooted will help you grow in your faith individually and as a Life Group. All of these practices are evident in the scriptures about the early church in Acts 2.

- Daily Devotionals - reading, meditating on and applying God's Word.
- Prayer - Communicating with God, sharing your heart, and listening to Him.
- Repentance - Confessing sin, turning toward God, and seeking freedom from strongholds.
- Sacrificial Generosity - Joyfully giving time, resources, and kindness as an act of dependence on God.
- Serving the Community - Demonstrating faith through action by serving others.
- Sharing Your Story - Confidently telling others how God is working in your life.
- Worship - Consistently setting aside time to give God glory and remember His works.



Daily Devotion



Prayer



Repentance



Sacrificial Generosity



Serve the Community



Share Your Story



Worship

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT WEEK

- Begin Week 2: Who Is God?
 - Complete the assigned daily devotionals in Rooted Workbook.
- Come ready to engage in discussion.





ROOTED

COVENANT

It is our desire to promote a safe environment for sharing the most important things in life. We want to provide a place where people can reveal openly and confidently the broken areas of their lives without judgment or condemnation. We are not here to “fix” one another. We encourage openness, vulnerability, and intimacy during discussion and prayer times. In order to ensure a safe haven for personal sharing, we ask that each Rooted participant enter into an agreement of confidentiality.

To get the most out of this experience, our hope is that you make a commitment to attend all sessions and participate in the group discussions. If you cannot be there, group dynamics will be impacted. If you know you will miss the group meetings more than two times, we ask that you have a conversation with a member of the Formation Team to discern whether this is the best season for you to commit to Rooted.

While everything in this group is confidential, according to Indiana law*, we do have a duty to report abuse or neglect of a person whether they are a child or an adult.

In addition, information may be shared with ministry leaders solely for the purpose of resource recommendations, accountability, discipleship, or for legal or safety reasons.

I agree to attend group meetings and will keep all things shared by my group members confidential.

SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINTED NAME

*Everything in a group is to be kept confidential, but according to Indiana law^[1], we do have a duty to report abuse or neglect of a person whether they are a child or an adult. If you feel like harm is going to happen to any individual let a leader on staff at The Creek know. In addition, information may be shared for the express purpose of resource recommendations, accountability, discipleship, or for legal and safety reasons. ^[1] Indiana Code 31-33-5-1, Indiana Code 12-10-3-9(a) and 12-10-3-2(a)

YOUR STORY

Our story is God's story alive in us. The gospel of Jesus Christ is making eternal changes and we get to share how He is transforming our lives. In one of the weekly discussions, you'll be given the opportunity to share your 3-5 minute faith story with your group. Even if you're not yet a follower of Christ, you have a story to share.

Working through this card will help you to discover and deliver your story. Our story can be broken down into three parts: Before, Commitment, After. Spending some time reflecting on these questions and using this framework will help to keep your story concise, clear and compelling:

BEFORE:

- Before knowing Jesus, what was your life focused on? What were you most concerned about? How did you deal with setbacks or failures? What gave you credit for who you were? In what ways were you dissatisfied with life?
- Additionally, if you've believed since childhood, was there a season when your faith was deepened or became more real to you?
- If you are not a follower of Jesus, what is your life most focused on now?

COMMITMENT:

- When did Jesus disrupt your life? What led up to it? What happened? How did the gospel message compel you to trust Jesus and into a deeper relationship with Him?
- What was it like surrendering to Jesus as Lord?
- If this hasn't happened, you may consider answering: Who is Jesus to you today? or What led you to you to this Rooted experience?

AFTER:

- What is one difference trusting and following Jesus has made in your life (identity, confidence, peace, hope, purpose, healthy relationships, freedom, etc.)? What are you still learning today? How is God helping you experience freedom and abundant living? Why is trusting Jesus worth it?
- Additionally, if you've believed since childhood, describe how your relationship with God has changed over the years and seasons? How has God formed you to become more like Christ?
- If you are seeking out what following Jesus is all about, please share what you hope to get out of this Rooted experience.

YOUR STORY

Using the questions from the other side, try writing a few lines for each section below.

BEFORE: focus of your life before Christ and how you realized you needed Him

COMMITMENT: Share why, how and when you decided to trust and follow Jesus

AFTER: Describe the specific differences in your life (attitudes, thinking, motives, relationships, etc.) because of knowing, trusting, and living in Christ.

Here are some tips for making your story compelling and Christ-centered:

- Your story should point to change - Does your story clearly convey a transformation? Does your story share the impact the Gospel has had on your “before ” and “after”?
- Your story should point to Jesus and His work in your life. It’s not important to share every life event, but rather how your experiences led to your surrender to Christ. Is Jesus the central character in your story or are you?
- Practice your story by sharing it with family, friends, or your Life Group.
- Remember that God is not done writing your story, so you may find that as you practice sharing your story, God will bring other pieces about your journey that you can share with others.

WEEK 2 | WHO IS GOD?

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

This week during Rooted we're asking and answering the question: "Who is God?" This is probably the biggest, most life-impacting question we could ever ask and answer! What we think about God and how we think about God will make all the difference in our lives. The only bigger question might be what God thinks of us. Over the next 5 days, these are the questions you'll be exploring in your devotional time.

NOTE

- All readings and devotional questions for this week will be completed in your Rooted Workbook.
- Complete the Final Reflections in your Companion Guide (next page) in preparation for your group discussion.

DAILY WORK

Day 1: The Mysterious God | Read pages 20-22

Day 2: The World God Made | Read pages 24-26

Day 3: The Crown of God's Work | Read pages 28-30

Day 4: What Went Wrong? | Read pages 32-34

Day 5: The Best News Ever | Read pages 36-37

MEMORY VERSE

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death." - Romans 8:1-2

EXTRA RESOURCES

- *Knowing God* by J.I. Packer
- *Basic Christianity* by John Stott
- *None Greater* by Matthew Barrett

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Pause and ask God to show you what is most important for you to pay attention to in today's reading and reflection questions. Ask Him to help you surrender any concern over getting it right and instead focus on what He wants you to learn about who He is and what He wants to show you today.



FINAL REFLECTIONS

As you prepare for the conversation in your group, take a few moments to look over the readings and your responses from the past five days.

- What did God teach you this week? What questions do you have?
- What is one way God is inviting you to grow or change from this week's material?
- In light of this time of reflection, what are you asking God for?

WEEK 3 | HOW DOES GOD SPEAK TO US?

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

This week during Rooted we are asking and answering the question: “How Does God Speak to Us?” Whether we realize it or not, God is not hidden away and God is not silent. He has spoken to us and through His inspired Word, He continues to speak to us today! During the next five days, you’ll be digging into the fact that God is Revealer and how He reveals Himself to us today!

NOTE

- All readings and devotional questions for this week will be completed in your Rooted Workbook.
- Complete the Final Reflections in your Companion Guide (next page) in preparation for your group discussion.

DAILY WORK

Day 1: God Speaks | Read pages 42-44

Day 2: The Sword of the Spirit | Read pages 46-48

Day 3: Our Divine Helper | Read pages 50-52

Day 4: The Purpose of Prayer | Read pages 54-56

Day 5: Connecting with God in a Meaningful Way | Read pages 58-61

MEMORY VERSE

“Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” – Ephesians 6:17-18

EXTRA RESOURCES

- *Prayer* by Timothy Keller
- *Praying Like Monks, Living Like Fools* by Tyler Staton
- *Prayers for Today* by Kurt Bjorkland
- *Prayer* by Richard Foster

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Pause and ask God to show you what is most important for you to pay attention to in today’s reading and reflection questions. Ask Him to help you surrender any concern over getting it right and instead focus on what He wants you to learn about who He is and what He wants to show you today.



FINAL REFLECTIONS

As you prepare for the conversation in your group, take a few moments to look over the readings and your responses from the past five days.

- What did God teach you this week? What questions do you have?
- What is one way God is inviting you to grow or change from this week's material?
- In light of this time of reflection, what are you asking God for?

WEEK 4 |

WHERE IS GOD IN THE MIDST OF SUFFERING?

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

In Rooted this week, we will examine one of the most common questions people have when considering faith in God: If this is God's world and He is good, powerful, and loving, why is there so much pain and suffering? People in the Bible, such as David, wrestled with the same questions. We can find comfort in suffering by receiving hope and comfort from God, recognizing that God often answers prayers in unexpected ways, and that our suffering can help us grow in Christ-like character.

NOTE

- All readings and devotional questions for this week will be completed in your Rooted Workbook.
- Complete the Final Reflections in your Companion Guide (next page) in preparation for your group discussion.

DAILY WORK

Day 1: The Reality of Hardship and Suffering | Read pages 68-69

Day 2: You Are Not Alone | Read pages 72-73

Day 3: Double-Fisted Faith | Read pages 75-76

Day 4: Our Response: Surrender | Read pages 79-80

Day 5: Character Like Christ | Read pages 82-83

MEMORY VERSE

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

– Philippians 4:6-7

EXTRA RESOURCES

- *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering* by Tim Keller
- *The Problem of Pain* by C.S. Lewis
- *Writing Your Own Lament* by Jenna Perrine

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Pause and ask God to show you what is most important for you to pay attention to in today's reading and reflection questions. Ask Him to help you surrender any concern over getting it right and instead focus on what He wants you to learn about who He is and what He wants to show you today.



FINAL REFLECTIONS

As you prepare for the conversation in your group, take a few moments to look over the readings and your responses from the past five days.

- What did God teach you this week? What questions do you have?
- What is one way God is inviting you to grow or change from this week's material?
- In light of this time of reflection, what are you asking God for?

WEEK 5 | THERE IS AN ENEMY

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

In Rooted this week, we are focusing on the spiritual realm. Scripture teaches Satan is the absolute enemy of God, His creation, and His people. The spiritual realm is real, and we are told to be alert to it. If we aren't careful, the enemy can gain a foothold (sometimes called a "stronghold") in our lives, because he wants us to be slaves to our sin. The good news is that Jesus can set us free from our sin-slavery because He has already defeated the enemy!

NOTE

- All readings and devotional questions for this week will be completed in your Rooted Workbook.
- Review the Sharing Strongholds guide on the next page in preparation for your group meeting.

DAILY WORK

Day 1: The Enemy Is Real | Read pages 88-89

Day 2: The Spiritual Realm | Read pages 91-94

Day 3: Tempting, Isn't It | Read pages 96-98

Day 4: The Enemy Within | Read pages 100-102

Day 5: Strongholds | Read pages 104-109

MEMORY VERSE

"For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear son." – Colossians 1:13

EXTRA RESOURCES

- Gary Johnson, the Creek's former lead pastor, preached a sermon series on how to prepare ourselves to take our stand against the enemy. View the Battle Lines sermon series at thecreek.org/sermons.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Pause and ask God to show you what is most important for you to pay attention to in today's reading and reflection questions. Ask Him to help you surrender any concern over getting it right and instead focus on what He wants you to learn about who He is and what He wants to show you today.



SHARING STRONGHOLDS

You will be given 3-5 minutes to confess your stronghold in Rooted this coming week (men with men and women with women). The group will use the outline below when confessing strongholds.

Everyone is encouraged to refer to their work from day 5 of this week's devotionals. You may also want to have your Rooted Workbooks handy to reference pages 107-109.

During this experience, we will use the format below. A timer may be used to allow for everyone to share within the allotted group time. Leaders will share first to model the format and set the tone for vulnerability.

Setting it up - Leaders ask who will share next.

Silence - "Let's hold _____ in silence before the Lord. _____ may break the silence when he/she is ready to share." Hold silence.

Sharing - When ready, the person sharing will break the silence and has 5 minutes to respond to the following questions in any way they feel invited.

- What types of strongholds do you struggle with that you identified on Day 5?
- What truth do you need to embrace in order to fight the lie you have believed?
- Would you be willing to read your prayer out loud and replace the lie with your true identity in Christ?

Silence - When the person finishes sharing, or the timer chimes, the group will hold brief silence.

Prayer - The group reads aloud: "Thank you _____ for allowing us to hold your confession."

WEEK 6 | HOW DO I MAKE THE MOST OF LIFE?

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

In John 20:21 Jesus says, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” This week we will be exploring what Scripture says about how we can partner with God in His redemptive mission for the world, serving His Kingdom – both in the Church and in the world.

NOTE

- Reading assignments and devotionals will come from your Rooted Book weeks 6 & 7. You’ll engage with select readings from each week rather than completing them all.
- During the week, you will be invited to explore your spiritual gifts utilizing the Spiritual Gifts Guide on the following pages of the Companion Guide.

DAILY WORK

Day 1: Call & Motive to Serve | Read pages 112-117

Day 2: Breadth of Service | Read pages 119-120

Day 3: Wired to Serve | Read pages 125-129

Day 4: Hands-On Love | Read pages 142-143

Day 5: Symbiosis (AKA: Give and Take) | Read pages 145-147

MEMORY VERSE

:We are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

- Ephesians 2:10

“The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of these brother and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

- Matthew 25:40

EXTRA RESOURCES

- *Love Where You Live* by Shauna Pilgreen
- *No Longer Strangers* by Eugene Cho and Samira Page

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Pause to pray, inviting the Lord to show you through His word the ways He calls you to serve and share in His redemptive work. Take your time as you read through these pages. Slow down to notice how you might be stirred to respond to the call to serve.



SPIRITUAL GIFTS GUIDE

God gives every believer spiritual gifts to serve others and advance His Kingdom. These gifts are not just natural talents or skills, but Spirit-given abilities to reflect Christ's love and grace.

NOTE: There are countless resources and assessments available to help you discover your spiritual gifts. However, no spiritual gifts inventory tool can replace the experience of discerning your individual gifting with a trusted fellow believer in the presence of God. We would love to connect you with someone who can serve as a companion in this process.

Discerning your spiritual gifts begins with prayer and reflection on God's Word. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul reminds us that the Holy Spirit gives a variety of gifts, each unique and each meant to build up the body of Christ. Before exploring specific gifts, take time to slowly read through 1 Corinthians 12. As you read, notice the different gifts listed and consider how God might be at work in you. Ask the Spirit to open your heart and mind to see where He has uniquely equipped you to serve, encourage, and strengthen others in the church.

WISDOM (1 CORINTHIANS 12:8)

The ability to see situations from God's perspective and offer guidance that helps others make godly decisions.

- Do people often come to me for advice when facing decisions?
- When I read Scripture, do I see clear connections to everyday life?
- Have others affirmed that my input helps them see things more clearly?

SERVICE (1 PETER 4:11)

The desire and ability to joyfully meet practical needs, often behind the scenes.

- Do I naturally notice tasks that need to be done and step in to help?
- Do I feel fulfilled serving in ways that others may not notice?
- Does helping others energize me more than leading or being up front?

ENCOURAGEMENT (ROMANS 12:7-8)

The ability to lift others up with words or presence, offering hope and motivation.

- Do I enjoy speaking words or writing notes of encouragement to others?
- Do people tell me my words came at just the right time?
- Do I find joy in helping others stay strong in their faith?

FAITH (1 CORINTHIANS 12:9, 13:2)

The confidence to trust God deeply and inspire others to believe Him even in difficult circumstances.

- Do I find it easy to trust God when things look uncertain?
- Do I pray bold prayers expecting God to move?
- Do others say my faith encourages their own trust in God?

LEADERSHIP (ROMANS 12:8)

The ability to guide people toward God's purposes with clarity and care.

- Do I enjoy organizing and motivating people toward a goal?
- Do people naturally look to me for direction?
- Do I find joy in helping others succeed and grow?

ADMINISTRATION (1 CORINTHIANS 12:28)

The ability to organize details, resources, and tasks so that ministry goals are accomplished.

- Do I enjoy making plans, systems, or schedules that keep things on track?
- Do I notice when details are overlooked and step in to help?
- Do people rely on me to bring order to projects or events?

DISCERNMENT (1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-10)

The ability to recognize truth from error and perceive the action of God in the midst of His people.

- Do I often sense when something isn't right spiritually?
- Do others seek my perspective when making difficult choices?
- Have I recognized harmful influences before others noticed?

PROPHECY (1 CORINTHIANS 14:1-4, 1 THESSALONIANS 5:20-21)

The ability to boldly speak God's truth in ways that encourage, challenge, or guide others.

- Do I feel a strong urge to share truths from Scripture with others?
- Do people say my words bring them closer to God?
- Am I deeply moved when I see God's people drifting from His Word?

KNOWLEDGE (1 CORINTHIANS 12:8)

The ability to understand and explain God's truth clearly so that others can apply it.

- Do I enjoy studying the Bible and making connections across passages?
- Do people say I help make Scripture easier to understand?
- Do I remember details and truths that others find helpful in decision-making?

TEACHING (JAMES 3:1)

The ability to explain God's Word in a way that brings clarity and application to life.

- Do I enjoy preparing lessons or explaining Scripture to others?
- Do people say I make complex truths easier to understand?
- Do I feel energized when helping others learn?

MENTORING

The ability to guide, teach, and walk alongside others in their faith journey over time. We see this modeled throughout the gospel in how Jesus led his disciples.

- Do I enjoy walking with others in long-term spiritual growth?
- Do I often invest in people one-on-one to encourage their faith?
- Do people see me as a trusted guide or mentor in their life?

SHEPHERDING (EPHESIANS 4:11)

The ability to care for and nurture others in their spiritual lives, like a shepherd with their flock.

- Do I feel a strong responsibility for the spiritual well-being of others?
- Do people feel safe and cared for when I'm with them?
- Do I naturally pray for and check in on others regularly?

GIVING (ROMANS 12:8)

The ability to joyfully and generously share resources to bless others and support God's work.

- Do I enjoy giving time, money, or resources to meet needs?
- Do I find joy in blessing others even when it requires sacrifice?
- Do I see generosity as an opportunity rather than an obligation?

MERCY (ROMANS 12:15, GALATIANS 6:2)

The ability to show compassion and empathy to those who are hurting or in need.

- Do I feel deeply moved when I see others suffering?
- Do people often come to me for comfort or support?
- Do I find joy in being present with those in pain, even when it's hard?

EVANGELISM (MATTHEW 28:18-20)

The ability to share the good news of Jesus in a clear, engaging way that helps people respond in faith.

- Do I naturally bring up spiritual conversations with others?
- Do people respond positively when I share my story of faith?
- Do I feel excited when someone comes to know Jesus?

HOSPITALITY (1 PETER 4:9-10)

The ability to make others feel welcome, accepted, and comfortable, often through opening your home or creating a safe space.

- Do I enjoy hosting and making people feel at home?
- Do I see my home or space as a tool for ministry?
- Do new people often become friends quickly in my presence?

APOSTLESHIP (EPHESIANS 4:11)

The ability to be sent out with the gospel, often in new or cross-cultural settings, to start and strengthen communities of faith.

- Do I feel drawn to share Jesus with people outside my usual circles?
- Do I adapt well to new cultures or environments for the sake of the gospel?
- Do I feel called to start new ministries or groups where none exist?

**This guide is intended to serve as an introduction to spiritual gifts and is not exhaustive. Scripture mentions other spiritual gifts not listed here, and we would love to have a conversation with you about how we believe the Holy Spirit gifts individuals and how He has gifted you.*

REFLECTION & RESPONSE

HOW DO I DISCOVER MY GIFTS?

- Pay attention to what brings you joy in serving.
- Notice when others affirm how God is working through you.
- Look for patterns: When do I feel most alive in ministry?
- Pray and ask God to reveal how He has uniquely equipped you.
- Step out and serve — gifts grow stronger when they are used!
- Seek out a fellow believer and invite them to join you in your discernment process.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Which gifts stood out to me as I read the descriptions?
- When have I experienced God using me in ways that align with these gifts?
- What do others affirm in me when it comes to serving or leading?
- Where do I feel most alive and fulfilled when I'm serving?
- How could I begin practicing or developing one of these gifts in my Rooted group, church, or daily life?

NEXT STEPS

- Meet with a staff person or leader to prayerfully discern how God has gifted you - email contact@thecreek.org
- Explore ways to serve at The Creek, locally, and globally - thecreek.org/serve

**REMINDER: YOUR GIFTS ARE NOT JUST FOR YOU — THEY ARE FOR THE GOOD OF THE BODY OF CHRIST.
DISCOVERING AND USING THEM IS PART OF HOW GOD GROWS YOU AND BLESSES OTHERS.**

REFLECTION & RESPONSE

Select a few questions from each section on the previous page and use the space provided below to prayerfully reflect and journal your thoughts.

REMINDER: YOUR GIFTS ARE NOT JUST FOR YOU — THEY ARE FOR THE GOOD OF THE BODY OF CHRIST.
DISCOVERING AND USING THEM IS PART OF HOW GOD GROWS YOU AND BLESSES OTHERS.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

As you prepare for the conversation in your group, take a few moments to look over the readings and your responses from the past five days.

- What did God teach you this week? What questions do you have?
- What is one way God is inviting you to grow or change from this week's material?
- In light of this time of reflection, what are you asking God for?

WEEK 7 | HOW DOES GOD VIEW MONEY?

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

This week in Rooted we are asking and answering the question, “How Does God View Money?” This week is all about aligning our view of money with God’s as we consider what steps He might ask us to take as we place deeper trust in Him to provide for our needs and as we act in faith by living generously.

NOTE

- Your Companion Guide will instruct you each day to view a video clip and read in your Rooted Workbook.
- You will answer questions in your Companion Guide.
- Videos are online and can be accessed using the QR code below.

DAILY WORK

Day 1: It's a Heart Issue | Watch Video 1 and read pages 158-160

Day 2: In God We Trust | Watch Video 2 and read pages 174-175

Day 3: Joining God in His Work | Watch Video 3 and read pages 166-168

Day 4: Owner vs. Manager | Watch Video 4 and read pages 162-164

Day 5: Freedom From Debt | Watch Video 5 and read pages 170-171

VIDEOS

<https://www.thecreek.org/rooted/week-7>



MEMORY VERSE

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” -Matthew 6:19-21

EXTRA RESOURCES

- Financial Peace University (typically offered in January)
- Moneywise class and budgeting workshops (offered monthly)

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Pause and ask God to show you what is most important for you to pay attention to in today’s reading and reflection questions. Ask Him to help you surrender any concern over getting it right and instead focus on what He wants you to learn about who He is and what He wants to show you today.



DAY 1: IT'S A HEART ISSUE

Begin by watching the Rooted Money Video #1. Once finished, read pages 158-160 in your Rooted Workbook and prayerfully answer the following questions.

- In Dan's video, he mentioned finances being the number one cause of stress in the United States. How has financial anxiety revealed where your trust lies? What might God be inviting you to surrender in this area?
- Perhaps the greatest shift in attitude when it comes to money is realizing everything really belongs to God and it is yet another opportunity to glorify Him with our finances. Reflect on this truth while reading through the list of Scriptures on pages 159-160. Circle words and phrases that stand out to you and pray through one specific passage.

DAY 2: IN GOD WE TRUST

Watch the Rooted Money Video #2. Then, read pages 174-175 in your Rooted Workbook and prayerfully answer the following questions.

- Dan defined contentment as an attitude of “enough” and being grateful for what we have. Furthermore, today’s Rooted content elaborated on this idea by saying, “At the end of the day it is a matter of trust (page 175).” Describe what contentment looks like to you. Where is God inviting you to grow in your vision of contentment?
- We’re not saying planning our finances is sinful. In fact, it would be unwise not to do so. However, we fall captive to false security when we rely upon and place trust in ourselves over God. After today’s content, what do you think it looks like to financially plan in submission to God? What does it look like to trust God first and plan out of that trust instead of planning apart from Him?
- Write a short prayer of confession for the times you have misplaced trust and allowed financial anxiety to overrun your trust in God.

DAY 3: JOINING GOD IN HIS WORK

Watch the Rooted Money Video #3. Then, read pages 166-168 in your Rooted Workbook and prayerfully answer the following questions.

- Have you given a tithe or charitable donation to a ministry before, and if so, how did the experience impact you?
- How has your understanding of tithing shaped your attitude about giving?
- Take a moment and ask God to show you how He might be inviting you to view giving as a response to His love.

DAY 4: OWNER VS. MANAGER

Watch the Rooted Money Video #4. Then, read pages 162-164 in your Rooted Workbook and prayerfully answer the following questions.

- When it comes to your own finances, in what ways do you have the approach of an owner and in what ways have you acted as a manager?
- Ponder Proverbs 3:9-10, "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops..." How do you involve God in your budgeting plans? If this is a new concept to you, how might you invite Him into your spending habits?
- If you have additional time, consider reading the article on page 156: "What is Poverty?" by Pastor Daniel Nunez. How can viewing money as first belonging to God and then stewarding what He has given us actually lead to the opportunity for us to bless others?

DAY 5: FREEDOM FROM DEBT

Watch the Rooted Money Video #5. Then, read pages 170-171 in your Rooted Workbook and prayerfully answer the following questions.

- What has been your experience with financial debt and how has it shaped the way you think or feel about money?
- What steps could you take – whether you are in debt or debt-free – to pursue financial health with accountability and support?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

As you prepare for the conversation in your group, take a few moments to look over the readings and your responses from the past five days.

- What did God teach you this week? What questions do you have?
- What is one way God is inviting you to grow or change from this week's material?
- In light of this time of reflection, what are you asking God for?

ROOTED WEEK 8 |

SHARING MY STORY & WHY THE CHURCH IS IMPORTANT

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

This week in Rooted, we move from our individual stories to the gathered church. We emphasize that God's work in us and his work in the Church are equally important. We highlight that belonging to a church is a crucial part of our personal faith and our witness to others – inviting them to Jesus and to church.

Some things about following Jesus get easier over time—praying, reading the Bible, going to church—but for many of us, sharing our faith doesn't. Whether it's fear of rejection, awkward conversations, or feeling unqualified, we often shy away from telling others about Jesus. But the truth is, if you're a follower of Christ, you have a story worth sharing, and God has placed you exactly where you are—on purpose—for the good of others and the glory of God.

Jesus once told His followers that they were the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world.” In His day, salt preserved food and healed wounds, and light was precious and strategically placed to illuminate dark places. Jesus used these metaphors to say: your life matters, and your presence brings healing, truth, and hope. But salt only works when it touches food, and light only helps when it's not hidden. In the same way, our impact comes when we're in real, authentic relationships with people who don't yet know Jesus.

You don't need to be a Bible expert or have everything figured out. Just be present, be real, and be willing. Whether you're at home, at work, at school, or in your neighborhood, God can use your life to shine light and bring hope. What might feel like a random place to you may be the exact spot where someone else encounters God's love through you. We are called to live with compassion, grace, and truth—trusting that God is already at work in the lives around us.

NOTE

- The Companion Guide will direct your daily readings from weeks 9 & 10 in the Rooted Workbook.
- Responses will be completed in the Companion Guide.

DAILY WORK

Day 1: God's Story | Read pages 185-187

Day 2: Your Story, part 1 | Read pages 190-192

Day 3: Your Story, part 2 | Read pages 195-197

Day 4: Worship & Ceremonies | Companion Guide

Day 5: Maturing | Read pages 220-222

MEMORY VERSES

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” -1 Peter 3:15

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” -Hebrews 10:24-25



DAY 1: GOD'S STORY

Read pages 185-187 in your Rooted Workbook, then prayerfully answer the following questions.

- What comes to mind when you think of evangelism?
- What do you think of the Gospel, God's story?
- What are the four parts to God's story as outlined in your reading?
- Write a keyword or sentence for each main part to help you remember them.

DAY 2 & 3: YOUR STORY

DAY 2

Read pages 190-191 in your Rooted Workbook, then complete the response exercise on page 192, using the prompts to examine YOUR STORY: BEFORE. *You can also look back to review your responses to the My Story questions on page 10 of the Companion Guide.*

DAY 3

Read pages 195-196 in your Rooted Workbook, then complete the response exercise on page 197, using the prompts to examine YOUR STORY: AFTER. *You can also look back to review your responses to the My Story questions on page 10 of the Companion Guide.*

DAY 4: WORSHIP & CEREMONIES

Today's reading is all in the Companion Guide.

Our walk with Jesus is more than a series of rituals or Sunday routines. At its core, following Him means living a life of worship. Worship isn't limited to singing songs in a service; it's our whole-life response to God's goodness, mercy, and grace. True worship happens when our spirit meets with God's Spirit, responding in gratitude and surrender. It isn't about a place, a style, or a ritual. Jesus said, "True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23). Real worship flows from authenticity—bringing our hearts honestly before God and glorifying Him in every moment of life.

WORSHIP

Worship is not something we fit into our week; it's the posture of our hearts before God every day. We worship when we acknowledge Him in our ordinary routines—when we marvel at creation, when we forgive someone who has wronged us, when we choose humility over pride, or when we serve someone in need. Worship happens when we turn our attention away from ourselves and place it fully on God, letting His character shape how we think, act, and love.

This means worship is not about personal preference but about God's presence. It's easy to evaluate a church service, the music, or the teaching based on what we liked or didn't like, but true worship calls us to shift our focus entirely. As C.S. Lewis once said, "The perfect church service would be one we were almost unaware of; our attention would have been on God." Worship leads us out of self-centeredness and into awe, gratitude, and intimacy with Him. The more we practice worship in our daily lives, the more naturally it flows when we gather together.

Just as worship is central to our faith, so are the ceremonies Jesus gave us: **baptism and communion**. These aren't empty rituals but tangible expressions of the gospel. Baptism celebrates our union with Christ—dying to our old selves and rising into new life. Communion invites us to remember and participate in Jesus' sacrifice. Both remind us of who God is and who we are in Him.

Baptism: A Step of Faith

Baptism is more than symbolic; it's a powerful act of obedience and identification with Jesus. Romans 6:3-4 describes it this way: "When we were baptized, we were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead, we too may live new lives." Going under the water represents dying to our old nature; coming up represents resurrection into new life with Him.

The earliest followers of Jesus understood this. In Acts, we see people baptized immediately after believing in Christ. Baptism wasn't an optional step; it was their first act of obedience, declaring, "I belong to Jesus." Jesus Himself commanded us: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

But baptism is more than following a command. It's an invitation into God's story. It declares, publicly and joyfully, that we've said "yes" to Jesus—trusting His death and resurrection, repenting from our old ways, and confessing Him as Lord. The water itself doesn't save us, but Scripture shows us that baptism is deeply connected to our response of faith. It's where we mark the turning point: I was lost, but now I'm found. I was dead, but now I live.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

In Acts 22:16, a new believer was challenged with this simple question: "What are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name!" That question still matters today. If you believe in Jesus—trusting Him as Savior and surrendering to Him as Lord—why wait? Baptism is the next step. Here's what Scripture says readiness looks like:

- **Believe** — Trust in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection (John 3:16).
- **Repent** — Turn from your old ways and follow Him (Acts 2:38).
- **Confess** — Declare with your words and life that Jesus is Lord (Romans 10:9).

If that's your story, your next step is baptism—immersed in water, united with Jesus, and stepping into new life. It's not about having all the answers or having your life perfectly in order. It's about saying, "Jesus, I'm yours." So, what are you waiting for? Today could be the day you take this step of faith, marking a new chapter in your journey with Him. If you want to talk to someone about being baptized, visit thecreek.org/baptism.

COMMUNION: REMEMBERING THE CROSS

Just as baptism marks the beginning of our new life with Christ, communion reminds us continually of the cost of that life. On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus shared a Passover meal with His disciples and redefined its meaning: "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me... This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:24-25).

Communion is more than a ritual; it's a living reminder of God's love. The bread represents Christ's body, given for us. The cup represents His blood, poured out for our forgiveness and the promise of eternal life. When we take communion, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes again.

But Scripture calls us to approach the table thoughtfully: "Let a person examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink of the cup" (1 Corinthians 11:28). Just as the yeast was removed before the Passover meal, we are invited to examine our hearts, confess our sins, and receive God's grace afresh.

Communion draws us back to the heart of the gospel. It reminds us of God's rescue, renews our gratitude, and refocuses our worship on Jesus—the One who gave everything for us. It is both a personal moment of reflection and a shared celebration of God's faithfulness.

Every time we take the bread and cup, we remember: We are loved. We are forgiven. We are His.

DAY 4: REFLECTION

Spend some time responding to the following reflection questions:

- Where in your life do you worship in spirit and truth?
- What obstacles do you find get in the way of your authentic worship?
- What has been your experience with communion? Do you have any new thoughts or questions about it?

DAY 5: MATURING

As you read about maturing, remember your own story – where you were before Christ and where you’ve come. None of us will reach perfection in this life, but it is worth celebrating where we are. In the words of the song, “I’m not yet where I’m going, but I’m a long way from where I was.” (We The Kingdom, No Doubt About It) And the beauty of the Church is that we’re all in process – we’re all on a journey of maturing together. We come together to worship and remember, but also to say to one another, “Let’s go!”

Read pages 220-222 in your Rooted Workbook, then prayerfully answer the following questions.

- How can your life group join God’s mission of restoration in your surrounding community and beyond?
- In what ways will your relationship with God be strengthened by committing to a life group that cares for each other and the world around them?
- Review your story that you wrote this week and prepare to share in your group’s story experience.

FINAL REFLECTIONS

As you prepare for the conversation in your group, take a few moments to look over the readings and your responses from the past five days.

- What did God teach you this week? What questions do you have?
- What is one way God is inviting you to grow or change from this week's material?
- In light of this time of reflection, what are you asking God for?

WEEK 9 | PARTNERSHIP & MVP

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

In week 9, we move from why church is important to making a commitment to be an active part of the church. We will share about partnership with The Creek and give a chance for interaction when you meet this week. In preparation for the discussion, you will work through The Creek's MVP and pieces of the partnership commitment.

NOTE

- The Companion Guide will direct you to your daily readings this week.
- Responses will be completed in the Companion Guide.
- Your group's next meeting will look a little different as you gather for The Creek Partnership Class. There will be a shorter amount of time for discussion.

DAILY WORK

Day 1: All in the Family | read pages 208-209

Day 2: Part of The Creek Family- For the 317, Mission & Vision | reading included in Companion Guide

Day 3: Rooted Rhythms → Priorities | reading included in Companion Guide

Day 4: Partnership Reflection – Expectations | reading included in Companion Guide

Day 5: Partnership Reflection - Expression of Commitment | reading included in Companion Guide

MEMORY VERSE

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. - Colossians 3:12

EXTRA RESOURCES

- Found at thecreek.org/sermons:
 - Seven sermon series
 - For the 317 sermon series

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Pause and ask God to show you what is most important for you to pay attention to in today's reading and reflection questions. Ask Him to help you surrender any concern over getting it right and instead focus on what He wants you to learn about who He is and what He wants to show you today.



DAY 1: ALL IN THE FAMILY

Read pages 208-209 in your Rooted Workbook and prayerfully answer the following questions.

- When it comes to church, how would you describe the difference between attending and belonging?
- What changes when you think of church as a family rather than a place you occasionally attend?

DAY 2: PART OF THE CREEK FAMILY

Now that we've talked about the importance of being part of a church family, it is time to turn our attention to being part of this church family at The Creek. This week, we're diving into what The Creek is about, as defined by our Mission, Vision, and Priorities (our MVP). And we're exploring how we declare we're all in by becoming a partner with The Creek.

In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus gave His church our marching orders:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

This command from Jesus – His final words on earth to His followers – is the basis of our vision to **connect people to Jesus**.

Read John 15:1-5 and Mark 2.

There are two aspects of connecting people to Jesus.

First, we must be connected ourselves; we are the branch, he is the vine, and the most pressing priority on our life, every single day, is to remain in Him. It is the only path to life – a disconnected branch will die.

The second aspect of our vision is helping people who do not yet believe in God learn the good news of who God is and all that He has done for the world, and to know that they can have a personal relationship with God by placing their faith in Jesus. We want to have the kind of attitude that won't stop getting people close to Jesus – even if it means destroying the roof!

Our vision is connecting people to Jesus and our mission is **loving God, loving people, and making disciples**.

This mission comes straight from both Matthew 28, which we read above, and Matthew 22:36-40, that says:

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Loving God is about meeting Him in Scripture and in worship so that we can stay faithful, pursue Him, and obey Him joyfully. Loving people is not passive. It's about living on mission and sharing the hope we have in Jesus. Theologian Dallas Willard says, "Love is not desire — it is to will the good of others... We love something or someone when we promote its good for its own sake." Making disciples is about being a disciple – a follower who is abiding and maturing in Christ – who is investing in relationships with others, helping them abide and mature.

When we set our eyes on loving God, loving people, and making disciples, our vision of connecting people to Jesus will be a natural by-product. This mission doesn't happen without work on our part, and it doesn't happen overnight. In fact, within ourselves, we aren't capable to show that kind of love. Read 1 John 4:7-12. The love that we share with God and with those around us comes from God Himself! That is why staying connected to the vine, and drawing our life and love from that connection to Jesus is absolutely critical.

Reflection:

- What's your honest reaction to connecting people to Jesus? What emotions or thoughts does that trigger?
- Read Mark 10:45 and Luke 19:10. What did Jesus say his mission was while on earth? What stories of Jesus come to mind what you think of him serving others or seeking the lost?
- Reflect on the reading from 1 John 4. How might the idea of loving God or loving people change when you realize that it is God's own love for us that we're sharing?
- Of loving God, loving people, and making disciples, which one comes more naturally for you? Which one seems to be more of a struggle? Express your eagerness and your concerns to God in an honest prayer.

DAY 3: ROOTED RHYTHMS → PRIORITIES

Read Ephesians 2:20-22. Throughout the New Testament, the Church is referenced as the dwelling place of God. We're not just members of a family, we are the blocks with which God is building a temple for His Spirit to live and act in the world. As this earthly temple, there are certain things that naturally become priorities for us, both individually and as a church.

The rhythms of a life group that you've explored in Rooted are about action. They describe how a group will interact, the activities and lifestyle choices they will make, and the regular rhythms they will adopt.

Here are those rhythms you've participated in:

- Daily Devotion – intentional reading and reflecting on God's Word.
- Prayer – regular communication with God through the prayer experience, daily work, and group time.
- Repentance – sharing strongholds with one another and being open with your struggles.
- Sacrificial Generosity – learning about and perhaps starting to practice generosity with your time, talent, and treasures.
- Serve the Community – you learned what it means to serve the church community as well as the community around us. And you put that into practice at a serve experience.
- Share Your Story – you've shared your testimony and learned how to see God's intervention in your life so that you're able to share the hope you have in Christ with your friends and family.
- Worship – you've celebrated together, valued the importance of regularly participating in worship services, and learned how worship is a whole-life response to God's goodness.

The priorities of The Creek describe less of what we do, and more of who we want to be as the temple of the Holy Spirit. You'll notice overlaps in the language of Rooted rhythms and The Creek's priorities, but as you read these priorities, remember these are about who we're becoming by participating in the rhythms.

Here are the 7 priorities of The Creek:

- Worship | We seek God's presence and honor in everything we do.
- Gospel | We proclaim the good news of Jesus and center our lives on his teaching and example.
- Kingdom | We desire to see the fame and deeds of God renewed in our day – in Indianapolis and around the world.
- Scripture | We delight in God's word and live it out on a daily basis.
- Identity | We receive God's love and embrace our adoption as sons and daughters.
- Community | We value relationships and build our lives together as family.
- Generosity | We share our resources to enrich others and advance God's kingdom.

You could say we are a "Worship People" or a "Scripture People," because these statements reflect how we find our identity in Christ and live in response to Him. This isn't something unique to our church—it can be true for anyone who follows Christ. Daily rhythms like devotion, prayer, and serving help shape us into this kind of people.

Reflection:

- What does Ephesians 2:22 mean when it says, “And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit”?
- How would you describe the similarities between the Rooted rhythms and The Creek’s priorities? The differences?
- How will you live out the priorities of The Creek in your own life? How will practicing the rhythms of Rooted help you do that?
- Your participation in your life group will have a corresponding effect. As you engage, consider: How can your group support you in living out these priorities? And in turn, how can you help your group do the same?

DAY 4: PARTNERSHIP REFLECTION- EXPECTATIONS

During this week's group meeting, we will learn more about what partnership with The Creek is about. In preparation for that meeting, we're going to explore the parts of the agreement.

Read Colossians 3:12-17. How does the instruction to "put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity," inform how you approach these expectations?

Expectations of The Creek

- Faithfully proclaim the gospel of Jesus and accurately teach sound doctrine, in accordance with the Scriptures and our statement of faith.
- Focus the ministry of the church toward embodying our priorities and accomplishing our mission and vision, both individually and collectively.
- Shepherd those in the church toward maturity in faith and wholeness in Christ.
- Equip those in the church for the work of ministry.
- Pray for the needs of the body, especially those who are sick and in need.
- Steward the financial resources entrusted to the church with wisdom, integrity, and transparency.
- Appoint leaders who strive to live a life that is above reproach, worthy of Christ, and worthy of emulation.
- Communicate about the health and direction of the church honestly and transparently.

Expectations of Partners

- Align with the doctrinal beliefs of our church, expressed in our statement of faith.
- Engage with and live out The Creek's mission, vision, and priorities.
- Maintain unity with the body and with one another, giving no place for pride, bitterness, gossip, slander, or division.
- Resolve conflict as quickly as possible, motivated by love and a desire for restoration, in accordance with biblical directions.
- Pursue personal holiness in all areas of life, in accordance with the Scriptures.
- Prioritize weekly worship gatherings and pursue deep, meaningful relationships characterized by encouragement and accountability with others at The Creek.
- Use their time, talents, and spiritual gifts for strengthening the body and serving the community.
- Give generously to support the ministry of the church.
- Submit to the spiritual authority of the elders at The Creek, making the work of leadership a joy.

Reflection:

- Which of the expectations of The Creek stand out to you? Why?
- Which of the expectations of partners stand out to you? Why?
- What makes you eager to join as a partner of The Creek? What causes hesitation?

DAY 5:

PARTNERSHIP REFLECTION- EXPRESSION OF COMMITMENT

If you sense God leading you and choose to become a partner, you'll be agreeing to this expression of commitment.

As a baptized follower of Jesus, I hereby affirm (or reaffirm) my desire to partner with the faith family at The Creek, by the prompting of the Holy Spirit, for the glory of God. I am in agreement with The Creek's statement of faith and desire to embody The Creek's priorities and carry out The Creek's mission and vision. I am committed to being actively engaged in this church family. I understand and agree with the expectations The Creek has of me, as well as the expectations The Creek has agreed to on my behalf. I recognize this relationship can be dissolved at any time, either by my choosing or by the decision of the elders of The Creek.

Often, we can skip past a statement like this (terms and conditions, anyone?) and just sign on the line. Instead, as you have read the expectations yesterday and this statement of commitment today, and as you prepare to hear more about partnership in your next group meeting, we invite you to pause, read slowly through them and pray.

Reflection

- What part of this commitment brings excitement or joy?
- Does any part raise questions for you?
- What does it mean to you to sign this by the prompting of the Holy Spirit and for the glory of God?

FINAL REFLECTIONS

As you prepare for the conversation in your group, take a few moments to look over the readings and your responses from the past five days.

- What did God teach you this week? What questions do you have?
- What is one way God is inviting you to grow or change from this week's material?
- In light of this time of reflection, what are you asking God for?

PARTNERSHIP CLASS NOTES

WEEK 10 | BECOMING A COVENANT COMMUNITY

WEEKLY OVERVIEW

In week 10, we'll move from "commitment to the church" to "commitment to the life group." The conversation will be how your group is the strongest place of connection between personal formation and the mission, vision, and priorities of The Creek.

To prepare through the week, you will reflect on the covenant and be prompted to write gratitude and words of blessing that will be shared during the Celebration time. As you sit with the covenant, you will also be invited to discern if you are ready to commit to this life group.

NOTE

- All readings and devotions will come from the Companion Guide this week.
- You will be writing words of blessing for each member of your group. These will be read during the Rooted Celebration time.

DAILY WORK

Day 1: Gratitude and Blessings

Day 2: Partnership Reflection

Day 3: From Creek Family to Life Group Family

Day 4: Life Group Covenant → Expectations

Day 5: Committing

MEMORY VERSE

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. All the believers were together and had everything in common." - Acts 2: 42, 44

BEFORE YOU BEGIN...

Pause and ask God to show you what is most important for you to pay attention to in today's reading and reflection questions. Ask Him to help you discern where He is leading you and what He wants to show you today.



DAY 1: GRATITUDE AND BLESSINGS

To begin your week (this assignment will most likely continue through the week), you will be writing thank you notes and blessings for each person in your group using the provided cards. These blessings will be shared with each group member during the Rooted Celebration.

Philippians 1: 3-6 says, *"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."*

One of the beautiful parts of the Rooted experience is the joy of partnering with others in the Gospel – the encouragement you've received and have been able to share. In this final week, whether you are continuing with your life group or not, you'll have an opportunity to share and receive blessings from other group members.

- **Part 1:** Write one word or a short phrase of blessing or affirmation over every member of your group, using one card per person. Call out something God is doing in them or an attribute of God you see in them. These will be collected and read over each person in the group meeting.
- **Part 2:** For those you want to thank or share more with, you can write that on the back of the card. You're welcome to write a note to everyone, but that's not necessary. These notes will not be read out loud.

DAY 2: PARTNERSHIP REFLECTION

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. - Acts 2: 42-47

Take some time to read the Acts 2 passage. Read it slowly a few times over. Pause between readings to allow space to listen and soak in the words. After reading and sitting with the passage, reflect on the questions below.

Reflection:

- What aspects of the early church do you see evident here at The Creek?
- Now that you have had a chance to read the partnership document and hear more at the Partnership Class, are there any lingering questions you have?

DAY 3: FROM CREEK FAMILY TO LIFE GROUP FAMILY

Before jumping into today's devotional reading, spend some time re-reading Acts 2: 42-47.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. - Acts 2: 42-47

In light of these scriptures, consider: What aspects of the early church do you hope will emerge in your life group?

In general, life groups gather weekly in a home to share with one another about life. They discuss the sermons using a discussion guide provided by The Creek, they pray with and for one another, confess, and hold one another accountable. Often, food is involved (praise the Lord!). As a regular group rhythm, groups serve together or share extended times of prayer. In some groups, men or women meet monthly to check in and share more deeply. For some groups, kids are a weekly presence, sharing the meal with everyone, then going to another area to play together. In other groups, the kids stay home so that mom and dad can have some uninterrupted time with the group.

Hopefully, you can see that no two groups look the same – life groups are called that, not just because we share life with one another, but because they have to work in real life, whatever your current stage of life is. So they will most likely need to flex based on the season. They won't be perfect, and they don't need to be. They need to be real. They need to be covenantal.

What is a covenant community? It is a group of people who willingly bind themselves together to be committed to pursuing God together. It means you care not only for your own growth as a Jesus-follower, but also for the growth of the other members of your group. Your community becomes a priority in your life because you believe it's important enough to say yes to your group, even if it means saying no to other possible commitments. The reason you enter into a covenant with one another is so that when you look around the circle of your group, you can know that each person there is committed to the same goal with the same conviction. That is how groups grow together in relationships and in Christlikeness – which is always our ultimate goal. And it's how they make a difference in one another's lives, in the church, and in the world.

With that understanding, let's move on today and tomorrow to the actual words of the covenant. Here is the first part of The Creek's Life Group Covenant:

As disciples, we pursue formation into Christ's likeness by abiding in Christ through worship, teaching, Scripture, prayer, and community. We live this out through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in accountability with others. We acknowledge the authority of Scripture and pursue emotional and relational health all as a part of growing in spiritual maturity.

As people with a purpose in the Kingdom of God, we seek to proclaim the Gospel in our community by serving others and sharing the hope of Jesus. We partner with God by generously giving our time, gifts, and resources. We understand that each group will live out these aspects of community a little differently.

Reflection:

- How is covenant community different than how you might've been thinking about life groups before?
- As you review your current life circumstances, what might stand in the way of agreeing to join a covenant community?
- How will you work through those obstacles to make your life group a priority?

DAY 4: LIFE GROUP COVENANT- EXPECTATIONS

In any contract or covenant you sign, there are stipulations on how to keep that covenant. In order to participate in a covenant community, there are things you can expect from others and that they can expect from you. In the small print that sometimes we humans don't like reading, that means that you are also giving authority to others in your group to hold you to these expectations and to have a loving accountability conversation if they are seeing or sensing something in your life that is out of line with these promises you're making. In The Creek's covenant, you'll see these expectations listed:

In order to accomplish this goal, we expect each life group participant to:

- *Attend your life group regularly.*
- *Pursue a life of abiding in Christ that reflects the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)*
- *Contribute to group discussion with vulnerability and transparency.*
- *Engage in weekly worship gathering.*
- *Pray for and care for your group members.*
- *Speak the truth in love and humbly receive loving accountability.*
- *Maintain confidentiality of what is shared in the group.*

It's been mentioned before that each group is in a different season of life, is made up of people in various stages of their faith journey, and has a blend of passions and gifts that makes it unique. That is why, when you first discuss this covenant at your Week 10 group gathering, you will have a chance to look over each expectation and to create others that are fitting for your group. Some groups add expectations about how they will handle childcare, how they will manage the use of phones during their meetings, how they will specifically approach serving or prayer times, etc. There is a lot of flexibility, and our team would be happy to talk through those options with your group.

Any list of expectations your group creates is not set in stone; there are times built into each year (i.e. Life Group Vision Nights) where your group will reflect on your covenant and make adjustments to better fit your current season. You don't have to wait for those times; your group can review your covenant at any time that seems necessary.

Now that you understand what the covenant says and what you'll be saying yes to, it's time to decide. Are you ready to step into a long-term committed relationship with the people you've been engaged with over the past several weeks? Yes, if you're thinking this sounds like a marriage proposal, you're not too far off! When you say yes, you're saying yes to a family – not just some people who happen to get together to pray, read, and talk about the sermon. You're stepping into a beautiful picture of the church and of the relationship we have with Jesus.

Saying yes to a commitment like that isn't to be taken lightly. It will most likely be an important stepping stone on your way toward being more like Jesus – one you will not regret. But perhaps this isn't the right time or maybe you're not quite at the point of wanting to make that kind of commitment. Don't rush into making a decision either way; whether it's a yes or no, you need to cover your decision in prayer and careful thought. In a similar situation, Jesus warned his followers to not take their decision lightly:

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' " Luke 14:26-30

A decision to join a life group that will help you pick up your own cross and give you a chance to help others bear their cross is no small decision. Your decision doesn't have to be made today! If you need more time for praying or more conversation, that's ok too! Just make sure you carve out intentional time to have those conversations with God and with others.

There is great power in inviting others into your life in this way – transformative power. We pray that you will find this kind of community. If not now, soon. May God bless your decision making!

Reflection

- What does it look like to say yes to this group? What costs do you need to count?

- Which of the expectations stand out to you? Why?
- Your group will brainstorm about additions to the covenant for their group. What ideas might you bring to that conversation?
- What excites you about being part of this group? What hesitations do you have?

DAY 5: COMMITTING

After praying and reflecting, write out your intention to continue with this group or not. These will be read during your Week 10 group discussion.

- Write what led you to that decision.
- Write what obstacles you perceive might get in the way.
- Write the value of continuing or not continuing.
- Write your hope for what it will mean to be part of this group. (OR)
- Write your hope for a future in community if your answer is no.
- Use today and the next week to finish up your gratitude and blessings to be shared during the Celebration.



PARTICIPANT COVENANT

A life group is a community of disciples intent on loving God, loving others, and making disciples in order to connect people to Jesus.

As disciples, we pursue formation into Christ's likeness by abiding in Christ through worship, teaching, Scripture, prayer, and community. We live this out through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in accountability with others. We acknowledge the authority of Scripture and pursue emotional and relational health all as a part of growing in spiritual maturity.

As people with a purpose in the Kingdom of God, we seek to proclaim the Gospel in our community by serving others and sharing the hope of Jesus. We partner with God by generously giving our time, gifts, and resources. We understand that each group will live out these aspects of community a little differently.

In order to accomplish this goal, we expect each life group participant to:

- Attend your life group regularly.
- Pursue a life of abiding in Christ that reflects the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)
- Contribute to group discussion with vulnerability and transparency.
- Engage in weekly worship gathering.
- Pray for and care for your group members.
- Speak the truth in love and humbly receive loving accountability.
- Maintain confidentiality of what is shared in the group. *

In addition to the guidelines listed above, our life group desires to:

I hereby understand and commit to upholding the expectations laid out for life group participants at The Creek and I commit myself to being and making disciples of Jesus.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

*Everything in a group is to be kept confidential, but according to Indiana law^[1], we do have a duty to report abuse or neglect of a person whether they are a child or an adult. If you feel like harm is going to happen to any individual let a leader on staff at The Creek know. In addition, information may be shared for the express purpose of resource recommendations, accountability, discipleship, or for legal and safety reasons. [1] Indiana Code 31-33-5-1, Indiana Code 12-10-3-9(a) and 12-10-3-2(a)



THE CREEK
CONNECTING PEOPLE TO JESUS