

# 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](http://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?