

GROUP GUIDE

ROOTED WEEK 5 | THERE IS AN ENEMY

OPENING PRAYER & INTRODUCE THIS WEEK'S TOPIC (5 MINUTES)

Welcome to Week 5! As you enter the fifth week of your Rooted experience, open with prayer, acknowledging God's presence.

Briefly introduce the topic for tonight's discussion (**consider inviting someone to read the introduction paragraph from this week's daily work included below**).

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!

EXPLANATION OF FLOW OF MEETING (5 MINUTES)

- Group will meet together for discussion, then will break off into separate groups for deeper sharing and prayer. Men will meet with men and women will meet with women.
- Remind the group that the confidentiality of the covenant extends to time of sharing when men and women are separated.
- To allow enough time for everyone to share their experience with strongholds in their life, you will not be sharing stories this week. Ask for two more people to share their 3-5 minute story the following week.
- Two people for next week: _____ and _____
- Remind group of details of Serve Experience and handle any lingering logistical needs or questions.

REFLECT ON PRAYER EXPERIENCE (10 MINUTES)

If your group has had the opportunity to engage with the Rooted Prayer Experience, spend a few minutes in reflection together.

- What would you like to share about the prayer experience? What surprised you? What challenged you? What might you want to try again?

DISCUSS ROOTED WEEK 5 DEVOTIONS (20 MINUTES)

- How did this week's readings and reflection questions impact your understanding of spiritual warfare?
- What are some lies you've believed about yourself because of sin?

TRANSITION INTO SHARING OF STRONGHOLDS

Let's prepare ourselves by reflecting on what God's Word tells us about His power over anything the enemy can do. Have someone read each of these verses: John 16:33; James 4:7-8; Ephesians 6:12.



- How do these verses put our spiritual struggles in context?

*Remember that we approach spiritual warfare from a position of authority. Tonight is an opportunity to share your struggle in a safe place. You may be afraid, but shame is a weapon of the enemy. Satan wants us to feel isolated and alone. Confessing our struggles and inviting others to walk with us builds connection and strengthens us spiritually. Before separating, **pray** for the experience that is about to happen.*

SHARING OF STRONGHOLDS & PRAYER OF REPENTANCE (60-75 MINUTES)

Everyone is encouraged to refer to their work from day 5 of this week's devotionals. You may also want to have your Rooted books 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 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."

CLOSING

Read Ephesians 6:10-18 over your group and close in prayer.



FACILITATOR BEST PRACTICES- STRONGHOLDS

- Confidentiality extends to this time when groups are separated. If there are couples in your group, this may cause some discomfort. In a marriage, secrecy often means hiding something about yourself that should be shared for the health of the relationship—this can erode trust. Holding something in confidence, however, means respecting another person’s story that they have chosen to share in a safe space. In the men’s and women’s Rooted groups, when someone shares a personal struggle, it is their story to tell, not ours to pass along—even to a spouse. This isn’t about keeping secrets from your spouse; it’s about honoring trust and creating an environment where everyone feels safe to be honest.
- Leaders should share first. This is an opportunity to model the format for sharing and invite a level of transparency and vulnerability. Consider sharing a past stronghold that you have experienced freedom from AND a current stronghold.
- Decide ahead of time if you need to set a time limit. This may be necessary based on the size of your group, especially if your time is limited. Set a gentle timer for one minute less than the time you wish to allow and ask the sharer to wrap up sharing when the timer goes off.
- Some may not come prepared to share a stronghold or say they don’t struggle with any strongholds. If this happens, invite them to review the areas of strongholds on pages 107-109 in their Rooted book and see if there’s anything that stands out to them - a stronghold past or present.
- If the individual still can’t identify anything, invite them to ask a friend or someone close in their lives to help them see what they are not able to see.
- If an individual says they identify with many of the strongholds listed, encourage them to focus on one or two for this exercise.
- Remind the group that the practice of confessing strongholds and praying for repentance is a rhythm carried into life groups, so there will be opportunities in the future to share more.
- Prayerfully consider what follow-up steps may be wise after this group session. People often experience “vulnerability hangovers” – shame and embarrassment over having been so transparent with others. Consider sending a text the next day to each person celebrating their courage in opening up. If someone shares something more serious (an addiction, thoughts of self-harm, etc.), please reach out to your Rooted coach. You may also privately suggest that anyone struggling with a heavier issue schedule a Care Appointment at thecreek.org/get-help.

