

# **Begin Facilitator Guide**



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## A Brief Note to You, Our Facilitators

*Before we begin, thank you.*

Thank you for stepping into this vital role of leading the Begin Class. Your investment of time, energy, and heart into guiding others through their journey of faith is a testament to your love for God and His Church. As you facilitate these sessions, know that you are part of something eternal—helping individuals deepen their understanding of salvation, experience the love of God, and embrace their identity as adopted children of the King.

**Your Role Matters.** You are not just leading discussions; you are creating a safe, welcoming environment for people to encounter God’s truth and grace. The space you cultivate allows participants to ask questions, wrestle with ideas, and take meaningful steps in their walk with Christ. Thank you for being present, attentive, and prayerful as you steward this responsibility.

**Be Encouraged.** God is with you. Remember, you don’t lead alone. The Holy Spirit is guiding you and working through you to touch lives. Your impact is eternal. The seeds planted during these classes may bear fruit in ways you may never fully see—but know that God is using you to make a difference. You are equipped. You have plenty of resources available to support you in this journey: the videos, workbook, and this guide are tools to help you succeed. Lean on them, but more importantly, lean on God as you prepare and facilitate.

As you lead, may you be reminded of God’s faithfulness in your own life. May your time preparing and facilitating deepen your love for Him and strengthen your confidence in His work in you.

We are praying for you and are grateful for your partnership in this mission of gospel saturation. You are making a difference in the lives of others, and we are honored to serve alongside you.

With gratitude and encouragement,  
*Your Pastoral Team and Equip Team*

## INTRODUCTION TO BEGIN

Welcome to Begin! Over the next few weeks, we'll focus on our church's mission to ensure that **every man, woman, and child has repeated opportunities to hear and see the Gospel**. Our goal is not just to connect people to a church experience, but to pursue gospel saturation in Western New York, where everyone has regular encounters with the good news of Jesus Christ through word and action. Achieving this vision requires every person in the body of Christ, as God has placed and gifted each of us uniquely to contribute to His mission. As a church, we are committed to equipping and mobilizing every believer to fulfill their role in this mission by **loving God, the Church, and the world**. Whether you're new to faith or have been walking with God for years, this class is for you—an opportunity to grow, be equipped, and be part of a journey toward gospel saturation.

Each class is 75 minutes, focused on who God is and the way in which he expresses his love through salvation. There will be approximately 30 minutes of video instruction, 30 minutes of interaction and discussion, and approximately 10 minutes to cover logistics and next steps. The class is led by you - the facilitator - and includes table discussion and independent reflection. The workbook will be used during and outside of class for this content.

Each week, we'll explore a new aspect of our relationship with God: *being saved by Him, being loved by Him, and being adopted into His family*. The workbook is a companion to the videos you'll be watching, with space to reflect, pray, and explore practical ways to live out these truths daily.

This guide includes facilitator notes and prompts for each class, access to the videos, and the participant workbook with further facilitator instructions. You can also find all referenced resources (and more) at [thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator](http://thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator).

### Practical Tips for Facilitators

- Have a timer or watch handy to ensure you stay on schedule.
- Encourage participants to engage, but also respect those who may prefer to listen rather than speak during the icebreaker.
- During and after the video, transition smoothly into any follow-up discussion or teaching outlined in the workbook.

### A couple of notes...

Attendance: At the beginning of each class, you should take attendance. You can take attendance through Planning Center Groups. This is most easily done through the Church Center App.

Completion form: At the end of each session, each participant will need to complete a form. The link is included in their workbook, but you should also make sure they have access to the link. This form will capture attendance for the class, will be a forum to provide feedback, and most importantly, will be a time for participants to reflect on class content.

Baptism Questionnaire: Each week, invite participants to fill out the [Baptism Questionnaire](#) if they haven't yet. This questionnaire will help participants take their next step toward baptism. Upon completion of the questionnaire, participants will be invited to register for the next Baptism class.

Church Center App: Each week, encourage participants to download and use the [Church Center App](#). Through this app, you'll be able to communicate with your Begin cohort, and help participants to better connect with all that's happening at The Chapel.

Feedback: Again, thank you for being our boots on the ground. As you facilitate the class, we would love feedback. Visit [thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator](http://thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator) to give feedback on these classes.

Lastly, throughout the workbook, all **FACILITATOR NOTES** will be written in **red font**. All other material is already included in the participant workbook.

# **Week 1: You are Saved by God**

## **Week 1 Overview**

Salvation is a free gift from God, one that brings freedom, transformation, and new life. This week's session explores what it means to be saved by grace and how this foundational truth impacts our identity and purpose in Christ. Understanding that salvation is a gift helps us live without the pressure of earning God's love, freeing us to rest in His grace.

### **FACILITATOR NOTES**

#### **Introduction (15 minutes)**

Start with a warm welcome (3 minutes):

- Introduce yourself & ask others to introduce themselves
  - Take attendance in GROUPS as participants are introducing themselves.
    - Each Begin cohort will have a specific group. You will be the leader of the group.
- “Welcome to Week 1 of Begin! I’m so glad each of you is here today. This class is designed to help us grow in our faith and understand our identity in Christ. Whether you’re new to faith or have been walking with God for years, there’s something here for everyone.”
- “Over the next few weeks, we’ll focus on key aspects of our relationship with God—being saved, loved, and adopted by Him. Today, we’ll dive into what it means to be saved by God.”

Set expectations for the class (1 minute):

- “This is a safe space to ask questions, share insights, and learn together. There’s no pressure to have all the answers—we’re all here to grow.”
- “Each week, we’ll watch a video, reflect on the teaching, and engage in discussion and activities. The goal is to take what we learn and apply it to our lives.”

Introduce the workbook (1 minute):

- Explain the workbook’s purpose
  - “The workbook is your companion for this class. It includes teaching summaries, reflection prompts, and things for you to practice throughout the week - including daily Scripture readings and prayer prompts - and space for journaling your thoughts.”
    - “Each week, you’ll also have opportunities to write about your grace story—your personal journey of faith. By the end of the course, you’ll have a clear way to articulate God’s work in your life.”
- Walk them through the structure:
  - “The workbook follows a weekly rhythm: opening discussion, teaching notes (and a place for you to take notes), practice and reflection, and supplemental resources. Each section builds on the last, so I encourage you to engage with it throughout the week.”

Icebreaker (8 minutes)

- Before we begin, let’s take a moment to get to know each other. Share your name, and answer a some of these questions as you feel comfortable:
  - *What drew you to attending Begin?*
  - *What are you looking forward to?*

- *Describe in brief your spiritual journey thus far.*

#### Introduction to the Video (2 minute)

- Set the stage for the teaching:
  - Today's video is all about the foundation of our faith: salvation. We'll look at what it means to be saved by grace, why we can't earn it, and how it transforms our identity and purpose. As you watch, I encourage you to take notes in your workbook. Look for key truths about who God is, what He's done for us, and how it impacts our lives."
- Provide a brief transition:
  - "Let's turn our attention to the screen now as we begin exploring the incredible truth that we are saved by God."



## Teaching

### PLAY VIDEO

QR CODE to video

[thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator](http://thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator)

### Section 1: Who is God?

A.W. Tozer describes God as a being of infinite holiness, majesty, and glory, and **far beyond human comprehension**.

As humans, we can't fully comprehend God, but some attributes we know about Him are:

- He is all-powerful (Jeremiah 32:17)
- He is all-knowing (Psalm 139:1-4)
- He is ever-present (Psalm 139:7-10)
- He is creator, sustainer, and redeemer (Colossians 1:16-17)
- He is triune (2 Corinthians 13:14)

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** A 60 second timer will be on the screen. Participants should answer this question during that time:

*What comes to your mind when you think of God?*

The video will automatically continue - however, pause if you need to refocus the room.

### The Trinity

The doctrine of the Trinity teaches us that God is one God in His essence, yet three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This reveals God's nature and character to us. Before He ever created or saved, God existed as one God in three persons. What are some things we should know about each member of the Trinity? Well, the Father is our Creator, whose love gives us our identity as His children. The Son, Jesus, is our Redeemer, reconciling us to God through His sacrifice and resurrection. The Holy Spirit is our Helper, empowering and guiding us in God's mission. Together, they show us God's love, redemption, and strength, deepening our relationship with Him and helping us live confidently in His love and purpose.

### **Key points:**

- Each person of the Trinity plays a distinct yet interconnected role: the Father initiates God's plan, the Son accomplishes it, and the Holy Spirit empowers it.
- The Father: Creator and Sustainer who loves us as His children (Genesis 1:1, 1 John 3:1).
- The Son: Redeemer and Savior who reconciles us to God through His death and resurrection (John 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:5).
- The Holy Spirit: Comforter and Helper who empowers and transforms us for God's mission (John 14:26, Acts 1:8).
- The Trinity shows God's love, redemption, and empowerment, strengthening our confidence in Him.

### Section 2: What's the Gospel?

In this section, we'll focus on understanding the gospel, which is central to our growth as Christians. Our goal is for you to leave with a clear understanding of the gospel for your own encouragement, as we never outgrow our need for it. Tim Keller reminds us that "The gospel is not just the A-B-C's, but the A-Z of Christianity. The gospel is not just the minimum required doctrine necessary to enter the kingdom, but the way we make progress in the kingdom." We also want to equip you to share the gospel with others, whether in your community, workplace, or family.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** A 3 minute timer will be on the screen. Participants should answer this question during that time and discuss their responses with people at their table.

*What is the gospel? If you were to explain the gospel to someone in 2-3 sentences, what would you say?*

The video will automatically continue - however, pause if you need to refocus the room.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** PAUSE THE VIDEO and facilitate this exercise.

This is intended to be a group exercise, so please divide the class into groups to focus on the four categories below (Creation, Fall, Redemption, and New Creation). If it's a small class, you can assign each part to a person. Allow for 5 minutes of time for each group/person to review their assigned portion. At the end of 5 minutes, have them teach the rest of the class what they learned. They will want to learn how to summarize each category. Prompt them: if you had to summarize this in 2-3 sentences, what would you say?

Creation: Here we start with God, who he is, and what He did in the beginning.

- There is only one Triune God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who is the Creator and source of everything (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 46:10; Genesis 1:1; Revelation 4:11).
- God's greatness is limitless, and He is worthy of our obedience and affection (Psalm 145:3).
- God is perfect in all His attributes, such as His holiness, justice, and love (Exodus 15:11; Psalm 145:8-9).
- In the beginning, God created everything "very good" (Genesis 1:31). There was no evil, disease, or death.

Fall: Here we learn who we are, the bad news of sin and its consequences, and how we have broken relationship with God.

- God created people to reflect, know, and serve Him, and yet we are guilty of rejecting Him (Genesis 3:6-7).
- We have all sinned and have ignored God's rightful place of authority and lived in defiance of His commands. We have placed our priorities and pleasure above His (Romans 3:19, 23).
- God is our King, and yet we have chosen to rebel against His kingdom and seek to establish our own.
- Sin is not merely a set of actions or words. It is the basic orientation of our heart. We have rejected God (Jeremiah 17:9, Matthew 15:19). Sin is rejection and rebellion against Him, choosing instead to worship and serve created things (Romans 1).
- Sin against our wonderful Creator is worthy of eternal punishment (Matthew 25:30, 46; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10).

Redemption: Here we learn about the work of Jesus Christ on behalf of sinners like you and me.

- God the Father graciously sent God the Son, Jesus to take on flesh. He joyfully and willingly came to do that which was required of us. We could not obey the will of God perfectly, but He did (John 1:14; Romans 8:3-4; Hebrews 2:14-18).

- Jesus suffered a death that He did not deserve and took our sins upon Himself. God's anger and wrath towards sin, our sin, was poured out on Jesus (1 John 4:10; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:4-6)
- Jesus willingly died as a substitute for those who would trust in Him. God the Father accepted the punishment of Jesus for those who would trust Him and applies His obedience to them as well (Romans 2:21-25; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13-14).
- Jesus rose from the dead on the third day showing His victory over sin, Satan, and death. This validated everything Jesus said and did (1 Corinthians 15:20-22, 55-57).
- Jesus now sits at the right hand of the Father, in the highest place of authority as the one true King and represents His people in the presence of God (Romans 8:35; Hebrews 1:1-4; 7:25).

New Creation: Here we learn about what God will do at the return of Christ and the hope that is in Him.

- God has promised that He will right every wrong, and no injustice will go unpunished (Romans 12:17-21; Revelation 21:8).
- Jesus promised that He would come back for us, and one day He will return to bring final judgment, to establish His kingdom in full, and make everything new (John 14:3; 2 Timothy 4:1-2; Revelation 19-22).
- God has promised that those who believe in Christ will have eternal life in Him, both now and forever (John 3:16; 17:3; Revelation 21:1-7).

Response: Repentance and Faith.

- Restored relationship with God, forgiveness of sins, and an abundant life in Him are available (John 10:10). How do we receive it?
- We can never merit, earn, or deserve the acceptance of God. Our hearts, not our actions, are the root of the problem (Ephesians 2:8-9, Galatians 2:16,21).
- We must trust completely in the value of Christ's perfect life, substitutionary death, and victorious resurrection. At the same time, we must turn from those things which enslave us. Our allegiance must turn from ourselves to God. Faith and repentance are the proper response to the Gospel (Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21). Those that receive Jesus receive eternal relationship with God, forgiveness of sin, renewed purpose, and eternal hope.
- Our lives are to be lived as He designed: for His glory (Ephesians 2:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, 10:31). Thankfully, He has given us His Spirit to make this possible (Ephesians 1:13-14).

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Once discussion is complete, continue the video. There will be a brief section of the video of Austin talking with a Campus Pastor, then the video will continue to section 3: Saved by Grace.

### **Section 3: Saved by Grace**

Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us that salvation is by grace through faith—it's a gift from God, not something we can earn. Sin, which separates us from God, is anything that falls short of His glory and is a violation of His holy standards. Although we are all sinners, God offers grace, the unearned gift of forgiveness and reconciliation through Jesus. When we accept Christ, we are saved from the penalty of sin, and our identity is rooted in Him, freeing us to experience His love and live a transformed life.

#### **Key Points:**

- Sin is anything that opposes God's will and falls short of His glory (Romans 3:23).

- It includes thoughts, actions, and attitudes that violate God’s nature (1 John 3:4).
- The consequence of sin is spiritual death and separation from God (Romans 6:23).
- Grace is unmerited favor—a gift we cannot earn.
  - Jesus took the penalty for our sins, offering us forgiveness and new life with God.
- We are saved through faith in what Jesus has done, not by our own efforts (Ephesians 2:8-9).
  - When we believe in Christ, we no longer face the penalty for sin and are given eternal life.
- Through Christ, we are forgiven and become children of God with a new identity.
  - We can begin to experience the love of God daily by walking freely in salvation.

#### **Section 4: The Freedom of Salvation**

Walking in the freedom of salvation means living daily in the grace and confidence that Jesus has given us. Salvation is an all-encompassing word. It includes something called conversion (when we are brought to faith in Christ), justification (the idea that we are declared righteous before God through faith in Christ), sanctification (a lifelong process of becoming more like Christ), and glorification (our promised future where we will be without sin and reigning with Christ forever). Central to our salvation is a new relationship with God that is marked by freedom. Because of Jesus, we are free from the penalty of sin and free from slavery to sin. We are free to obey God, which we could never do before. Our relationship with God grows through regular practices like spending time in God’s Word, prayer, worship, and engaging in confession and repentance. These daily habits help us stay connected to God, experience the freedom He has given to us, embrace His grace when we feel guilt, and walk closely with Him each day.

#### **Key points:**

- Salvation brings freedom we can experience daily.
- Jesus calls us to live confidently and closely with Him, unhindered by guilt and empowered by His grace (Galatians 5:1).
- We can walk in this freedom by spending time with God daily through Scripture reading, prayer, and worship.
  - Cultivate a rhythm of connecting with God and embracing His grace when we feel guilt.
  - Practices like morning prayer, Scripture reading, or stillness before God deepen our experience of freedom in Christ.
- Knowing God’s Word helps us understand our identity, His promises, and His grace (John 8:36).
- Regular confession and repentance keep us free from the weight of sin and renew our relationship with God (1 John 1:9).
  - Confession means acknowledging sin, thanking God for forgiveness, and choosing to turn from it through repentance.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** PAUSE THE VIDEO.

Guide the participants in a discussion of the following questions (5 minutes)

- *What are some daily practices you currently engage in to connect with God? How do you make sure these are regular rhythms in your life?*
- *What next step can you take in your communion with God? How can you begin to more fully experience freedom found in Him?*

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** After approximately 5 minutes of discussion, continue the video.



### **Grace story (10 minutes)**

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Each week after the video concludes and before we wrap up, give some time for participants to write out and refine their grace story. Here is this week's prompt. Give 10 minutes for participants to work on this.

Prompt participants to spend a few minutes writing about their personal experience coming to faith. This activity is in their workbook. Leave time for them to do this independently. After 5 minutes, if time allows, ask them to share some of their story with those at their table, as they feel comfortable.

- What was your life like before you came to know Christ?
  - What were your beliefs, struggles, or priorities?
  - How did you view yourself and your purpose?
- What led you to seek or respond to Christ? Was there a specific moment, conversation, or experience that helped you understand the gospel?
- How has your decision to follow Christ changed your perspective, values, or relationships? What specific differences have you noticed in your life?
- What does your life look like now as you walk with Christ? How do you experience His presence, guidance, and love in your daily life? What ongoing challenges or growth are you experiencing in your faith journey?

If anyone hasn't made a decision to respond to Christ yet, allow them to use this time to reflect on their thoughts and questions about salvation.

## FACILITATOR NOTES

### Wrap up (5 minutes)

#### Response Form

- “Before we close, I want to encourage you to fill out the response form. It’s a great way for us to stay connected and for you to share any questions, insights, or prayer requests you have after today’s session.”
  - *It can be found in your workbook via QR code. The link is [thechapel.com/beginone](http://thechapel.com/beginone)*
- “Please fill it out now! It should only take a minute or two!”

#### Baptism Questionnaire

- “If you haven’t yet been baptized – or were baptized as an infant - we would love for you to fill out this Baptism Questionnaire. We’ll be discussing baptism further during week three of Begin, but if you have any questions before filling out this form, I’d love to chat with you further after class!”
  - “You can fill out the questionnaire at [thechapel.com/baptismform](http://thechapel.com/baptismform)”. There is also a QR code in your workbook.

#### Church Center App

- “If you haven’t already, I encourage you to download the Church Center app. It’s a helpful tool for staying updated with what’s happening at our church, connecting to groups and events, and managing your involvement.”
  - If you need help downloading the App, I’m happy to help you!
- “It’s a great way to stay plugged in, and I’d love for you to explore it this week! You will also have access to Begin resources and our Begin group via this app.”

#### Practice and Reflection Section

- “As we go into the week, I encourage you to spend time in the *Practice & Reflection* section of your workbook. This includes:
  - Daily Scripture readings and prayer prompts to help you grow closer to God.
  - A space to reflect on today’s teaching and how you can apply it in your life.
  - Continuing to build out your grace story—it’s a powerful way to reflect on and share your faith.
- Take just a few minutes each day to engage with these activities. They’re designed to help you grow in your walk with Christ and experience the freedom and joy of salvation.”

#### Reminder of Next Week

- “Finally, don’t forget that our next session is next week at the same time and place. We’ll be exploring the incredible truth that you are loved by God, which builds on everything we’ve learned today.”
- Close in prayer
- “I can’t wait to see you all next week. If you have any questions or need anything between now and then, feel free to reach out!”

## Practice & Reflection

*This week, take some time to practice what you've learned and to spend time in reflection.*

### Daily Reading & Prayer Plan

Each day includes a short passage from Scripture, a reflection question to help engage with the text, and prayer prompt. As you prepare to engage the Scripture daily, consider the following steps:

1. Scripture - read the passage slowly - consider reading it 2-3 times, and reading it out loud at least once
2. Observe - ask questions of the text. Who wrote this text? Who are they writing to? What's happening? Where is this happening? When? Write down your observations.
3. Apply - Consider how you should respond to what you've read. Answer the reflection prompt provided if that's helpful
4. Pray - thank God for what He's shown you, and pray to faithfully live it out. Use the provided prayer prompts to guide you.

#### **Day 1: Ephesians 2:1-10**

- *Reflection Question:* How does this passage emphasize that salvation is entirely God's work and not ours?
- *Prayer Prompt:* Lord, thank You for saving me by grace and not by anything I could do. Help me to truly understand the depth of Your mercy and to live each day with gratitude for the new life You've given me in Christ.

#### **Day 2: Romans 5:1-11**

- *Reflection Question:* How does knowing that God loved us even while we were sinners encourage you to trust in His love today?
- *Prayer Prompt:* God, thank You for the peace I have with You through Jesus. Even in difficult times, remind me of the hope I have because of Your love poured out through the cross. Help me to trust in Your love and share it with others.

#### **Day 3: Titus 3:3-7**

- *Reflection Question:* What does this passage teach about the transformation that happens through salvation?
- *Prayer Prompt:* Father, I praise You for Your mercy that saved me and for the Holy Spirit who renews and transforms me. Teach me to leave my old ways behind and live as someone who has been made new by Your grace.

#### **Day 4: 2 Corinthians 5:11-21**

- *Reflection Question:* How does being a "new creation" shape your view of yourself and your purpose?
- *Prayer Prompt:* Lord, thank You for making me a new creation in Christ. Help me to embrace my role as Your ambassador, sharing Your message of reconciliation with those around me. Empower me to live as a reflection of Your love and grace.

#### **Day 5: John 3:1-21**



- *Reflection Question:* What does it mean to be “born again,” and how does this passage expand your understanding of salvation?
- *Prayer Prompt:* Jesus, thank You for teaching me what it means to be born again. Help me to fully understand the new life You offer and to live as someone transformed by Your love. Let Your light shine through me so others can see Your truth.

### **Day 6: Romans 6:1-23**

- *Reflection Question:* How does this passage encourage you to live out the freedom you’ve received through salvation?
- *Prayer Prompt:* God, thank You for freeing me from sin and raising me to new life with Christ. Help me to live each day in the freedom You’ve given me, resisting sin and choosing to live in righteousness that honors You.

### **Day 7: Psalm 103:1-12**

- *Reflection Question:* How does reflecting on God’s forgiveness and compassion inspire gratitude and worship in your heart?
- *Prayer Prompt:* Father, I praise You for Your forgiveness, compassion, and steadfast love. Thank You for removing my sins and treating me with mercy. Help me to live with a heart full of gratitude and worship You in all I do.

### Next Step Goal

#### **Why Set a Goal?**

As we grow in our faith, taking intentional steps helps us move closer to God and live out His purpose for our lives. Setting a "Next Step Goal" each week is a way to apply what you've learned and build habits that deepen your relationship with Him.

#### **What Is a SMART Goal?**

SMART goals are specific, actionable, and designed to help you make meaningful progress. Here’s what each letter in the acronym means:

- **S – Specific:** Your goal should be clear and focused. Instead of saying, "I want to pray more," say, "I will spend 10 minutes in prayer each morning this week."
- **M – Measurable:** Include a way to track progress. How will you know if you’ve achieved your goal?
- **A – Achievable:** Make sure your goal is realistic based on your current circumstances. For example, committing to 10 minutes of Bible reading is achievable, whereas an hour might feel overwhelming.
- **R – Relevant:** Tie your goal to what God is doing in your life right now. If this week’s teaching was about spending time with God, focus your goal on prayer, Bible reading, or reflection.
- **T – Time-Bound:** Set a timeframe for your goal. Weekly goals help you focus and stay motivated.

#### **Examples of SMART Next Step Goals**

- *Spending Time with God:* "I will spend 10 minutes reading the Bible each morning using the Week 1 reading plan."
- *Joining Community:* "I will attend a small group this week and introduce myself to two new people."
- *Getting Baptized:* "I will contact my pastor by Thursday to ask about the steps for baptism."

## Writing Your Next Step Goal

1. Reflect: Think about what God is teaching you this week. Ask yourself:
  - *What is one way I can grow closer to God based on what I've learned? How can I spend time with God daily this week?*
  - *Is there a specific area in my faith where I feel God is prompting me to take action?*
  - *Is there an act of obedience I've been feeling called to take, like baptism, joining a group, or serving?*
  - *How can I practice what I've learned in this week's teaching?*
2. Write Your SMART Goal: Use the space below to write your goal for the week. Make sure it is specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.  
*Example: "I will spend 10 minutes each morning this week reading and reflecting on one of the passages from the daily reading plan."*
3. Plan Your Steps: What do you need to do to accomplish this goal? Write down any practical steps or resources you'll need.  
*Example: "Set a reminder on my phone each night to wake up 10 minutes earlier."*

## Confession & Repentance Exercise

A key aspect of living in freedom is engaging in regular confession and repentance. Even though we're forgiven, sin can still disrupt our fellowship with God and weigh us down. Regular confession keeps us free from the weight of sin and enables us to fully experience God's grace. In 1 John 1:9, it says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." In confession, we agree with God that we've sinned, we thank Him for his forgiveness, and we choose to turn away from sin and trust God to change our wrong attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors. This is the act of repentance. By doing this, we can restore our fellowship with God. Confession and repentance is a regular act of the Christian faith.

Practice confession and repentance this week.

1. Read Psalm 139:23-24.

*"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."*

2. Pray: Lord, search my heart and reveal anything in me that doesn't honor You. Show me the anxious thoughts and hidden sins and shame I need to surrender, and lead me in Your everlasting way.
3. Confess: Write down anything that comes to mind that you need to confess. Consider these prompts as you reflect and confess:
  - *Is there anything that God has commanded me to do that I have not been obeying?*
  - *Is there any sin against the Lord or others that I have been covering up?*
  - *Is there any way that I have wronged someone and not sought to make it right?*
4. Close in prayer. Consider this prayer: *Father, I come to You with a humble heart, confessing my sins and acknowledging where I have fallen short of Your will. Forgive me, Lord, and cleanse me of anything that separates me from You. Help me to turn away from sin and walk in Your truth and righteousness.*
5. James 5:16 says to confess your sins to another person and to pray for each other. If possible, meet with another believer this week and confess your sins and pray together.

## **Supplemental Resources**

*This section includes resources to supplement what's learned and discussed in class this week.*

## **Week 2: You are Loved by God**

## Week 2 Overview

God's love is unconditional, unchanging, and deeply personal. Understanding this love gives us confidence in our relationship with Him. It means we're loved not because of what we do, but because of who we are as His children. This love forms the foundation of our identity in Christ and empowers us to live confidently.

### **FACILITATOR NOTES**

#### Introduction (15 minutes)

Start with a warm welcome (3 minutes):

- Introduce yourself and set the tone:
  - “Welcome to Week 2 of Begin! I’m so glad each of you is here today. This class is designed to help us grow in our faith and understand our identity in Christ. Whether you’re new to faith or have been walking with God for years, there’s something here for everyone.”
  - “Over these weeks, we’re focusing on key aspects of our relationship with God—being saved, loved, and adopted by Him. Last week, we explored what it means to be saved by God. This week, we’ll dive into the incredible truth that you are loved by God.”
- Ask participants to introduce themselves:
  - “Before we jump in, let’s take a moment to introduce ourselves. Share your name, and as we’re doing this, I’ll also take attendance in our group.”

Set Expectations for the Class (1 minute)

- “This is a safe space to ask questions, share insights, and learn together. There’s no pressure to have all the answers—we’re all here to grow.”
- “Each week, we’ll watch a video, reflect on the teaching, and engage in discussion and activities. The goal is to take what we learn and apply it to our lives.”

Introduction to the Workbook (1 minute)

- Explain the purpose:
  - “The workbook is your companion for this class. It includes teaching summaries, reflection prompts, and things for you to practice throughout the week—like daily Scripture readings and prayer prompts. It also has space for journaling your thoughts. Hopefully most of you were able to engage with some of these activities this past week.”
  - “Each week, you’ll also have opportunities to write about your grace story—your personal journey of faith. By the end of the course, you’ll have a clear way to articulate God’s work in your life.”
- Walk them through the structure:
  - “The workbook follows a weekly rhythm: opening discussion, teaching notes (and a place for you to take notes), practice and reflection, and supplemental resources. Each section builds on the last, so I encourage you to engage with it throughout the week. Today, we’ll be working through week 2, on page **\*\***”

Icebreaker (8 minutes)

- Get to know one another:

- “Before we begin, let’s take a moment to connect with each other. Share your name and answer some of these questions as you feel comfortable:
  - *What did you learn last week? What did you learn through this week’s practice and reflection activities?*
  - *When you think about being loved by God, what emotions or thoughts come to mind?*

#### Introduction to the Video (2 minutes)

- Set the stage for the teaching:
  - “Today’s video is all about God’s love. We’ll explore how His love is unconditional, unchanging, and deeply personal. This love forms the foundation of our identity in Christ and empowers us to live confidently as His children.”
  - “As you watch, I encourage you to take notes in your workbook. Look for key truths about who God is, how He demonstrates His love, and what it means for your identity and daily life.”
- Provide a brief transition:
  - “Let’s turn our attention to the screen now as we begin exploring the incredible truth that you are loved by God.”

## Teaching

### PLAY VIDEO

QR CODE to video

[thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator](http://thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator)

### Section 1: Our Identity in Christ

Our identity is profoundly shaped by the truth that we are saved by God and loved by Him. Last week, we explored how salvation is a gift of grace, received through faith, and not something we earn. This week, we expand on that foundation to see how God's great love for us gives us new life in Christ and defines who we are. His love, demonstrated most powerfully through the cross, transforms us into His beloved children and allows us to approach Him with confidence. Understanding and embracing this identity changes how we see ourselves and relate to others, freeing us to live securely in God's love.

#### Key Points:

- Ephesians 2:8-9 reminds us that we are saved by grace through faith, a gift from God, not by works. Faith is an act of trust and reliance on Him.
- Ephesians 2:1-5 shows that while we were dead in sin, God, out of His great love, saved us through grace and gave us new life in Christ.
- Romans 5:8 reveals that Christ's sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate demonstration of God's unchanging, immeasurable love.
- When we receive Christ, we become God's children, fully accepted and cherished by our perfect Father. (John 1:12)
- Our identity is not defined by our successes, failures, or the opinions of others but by God's love and grace. We are cherished, forgiven, and secure as His children.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Pause the video and guide participants through this reflection activity. (2-3 minutes)

“Take a moment to write down 5-10 words or phrases you would use to describe yourself. These can include strengths, weaknesses, and any defining labels or roles that come to mind. Be honest—this is a time for personal reflection. Then, take a minute or two to think about how these descriptors influence the way you see yourself daily. Do they impact your confidence, choices, or how you interact with others? Jot down any thoughts that come to mind.”

- Remember, there's no right or wrong answer. The goal is to reflect on how you currently see yourself, so write freely without overthinking.
- *Tip:* If participants seem hesitant, offer a few examples, like “kind,” “organized,” “anxious,” “parent,” “hard-working,” etc.

#### *Reflection*

*Write down 5-10 words / phrases you would use to describe yourself. Be honest - include both strengths and weaknesses, as well as any defining labels or roles.*

*How do these descriptors influence the way you see yourself daily?*

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** After a few minutes (2-3 minutes, as needed), facilitate part two of this activity. “As we move into the next part of the activity, we’ll look at what God says about our identity in Scripture and see how His truth compares to the words we’ve written.” Have participants read the scripture in smaller groups and then discuss the following prompts. After they’ve read and discussed in groups for about 5 minutes, discuss their responses as a large group. (10 minutes)

### Scripture Study

Read and reflect on the following verses. For each verse, consider what God says about your identity, and how this might compare to the words you previously wrote down.

- 2 Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”
- John 1:12 – “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”
- Ephesians 2:10 – “For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”
- 1 Peter 2:9 – “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”
- Romans 8:1 – “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”
- Colossians 3:3 – “For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.”

After you review these Scriptures, reflect and discuss:

- *Which verses impact you the most? Why?*
- *Are there any descriptors you wrote above you feel God is calling you to redefine based on your identity in Christ?*
- *How does embracing this identity change your actions, relationships, or sense of self-worth?*

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** After approximately 8 minutes of discussion, prompt participants to finish this activity by rewriting 3-5 words / phrases that reflect who they are in Christ, and then close in prayer. They can pray in small groups, or you can pray over the room.

### Write a new list

Write 3-5 new words or phrases that reflect who you are in Christ based on your reflection and discussion of Scripture.

Close in prayer

*Ask God to help you fully embrace your true identity in Christ and let go of any self-perceptions that don’t align with His view of you.*

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Allow 15 minutes max for this activity in whole. After 15 minutes, play the video. Section 2 will begin, and then it will transition to a section of the video of Austin talking with a Campus Pastor, then Austin will set up a time of discussion.

## **Section 2: Confidence in our Relationship with God**



Confidence in our relationship with God flows from His unchanging love and the authority of His Word. Ephesians 3:17-19 reminds us to be “rooted and established in love,” knowing the vastness of Christ’s love, which offers security and trust in God’s plans. While emotions and doubts may arise, our relationship with God is built on the unchanging truths of Scripture, not on our wavering feelings. The Bible, as the authoritative Word of God, reveals His character and promises, guiding us back to His love when we feel insecure or uncertain. Understanding God’s love and the authority of Scripture allows us to confidently approach Him, knowing we are chosen, known, and loved.

### **Key Points:**

- God’s love provides a secure foundation, as described in Ephesians 3:17-19, enabling us to stand firm in faith even amid struggles or doubts.
- John 15:16 highlights that our relationship with God is based on His choice and love, not our performance. This gives us security and confidence.
- The Bible is the unchanging, God-breathed truth (2 Timothy 3:16-17) that teaches, corrects, and equips us, offering assurance of God’s promises.
- While emotions are important, our relationship with Christ is grounded in the truths of God’s Word, not in fluctuating feelings.
- Hebrews 4:16 invites us to come boldly to God, assured of His love and faithfulness, even when we face doubts or challenges. We can approach God with confidence.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Pause the video, and encourage discussion:

- *Do you ever doubt if your relationship with God is secure? If so, what do you think makes you feel this doubt?*
- *What would change in your life if you lived each day fully trusting that God loves you and is with you?*
- *How can you rely more on Scripture when doubts or insecurities arise?*
- *Do you currently have other believers in your life that you can talk through your doubts with? If so, who are they? (If not, let us know. We want to help you get connected.)*

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** After approximately 8 minutes of discussion, play the video.

### **Section 3: Developing a Practical Relationship with God**

Confidence in our identity as chosen by God grows through an active, daily relationship with Him. Jesus calls us to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37-38), which involves putting Him first and prioritizing fellowship with Him. This relationship is strengthened through prayer, Scripture reading, and worship, allowing God’s love to transform us and align our lives with His purposes. As we spend time with God, we deepen our connection to Him, find strength, and learn to reflect His love in our relationships and daily living.

### **Key Points:**

- Matthew 22:37-38 calls us to love God with all our being, putting Him first in every area of life.
- Fellowship involves spending time with God, which allows us to know Him more, and gives an opportunity for His love to transform us.
- There are many practices that can help us commune with God. Some of them are:
  - *Prayer:* Share your heart with God and invite Him into your life.
  - *Scripture Reading:* Learn about God’s character, promises, and His desires for your life.

- *Worship*: Express love and gratitude to God, keeping your focus on Him.
- These practices connect us to our identity in Christ, reminding us that we are in a relationship with a loving God who equips us for the journey.
- Deepening our love for God helps us better love others and live in alignment with His will.

#### **Section 4: Empowered by the Holy Spirit**

As God's beloved children, we are not meant to live in our own strength. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would come to guide, strengthen, and empower us (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit is God's presence within us, pouring His love into our hearts (Romans 5:5) and enabling us to live out our identity in Christ. Through the Spirit, we experience God's love and are transformed to reflect His character, expressed through the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). The Holy Spirit equips us to face challenges, overcome doubts, and live confidently as God's beloved.

#### **Key Points:**

- The Holy Spirit is the presence of God living in us, guiding, strengthening, and empowering us for daily life (Acts 1:8).
- Romans 5:5 reminds us that God's love is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, helping us experience His love deeply.
- The Holy Spirit shapes our hearts and lives to reflect Christ, producing the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).
- The Spirit helps us overcome doubts, insecurities, and fears, grounding us in our identity in Christ.
- With the Holy Spirit's empowerment, we can live confidently, secure in our identity, and make a meaningful impact in the world.

### **Grace story (10 minutes)**

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** *Each week after the video concludes and before we wrap up, give some time for participants to write out and refine their grace story. Here is this week's prompt. Give 10 minutes for participants to work on this.*

Encourage participants to take 5-10 minutes to continue refining their grace story. Encourage them to write about their personal experience of coming to faith. As they reflect on the story they wrote last week, they should also consider the following prompts:

- How have you experienced God's love in a personal way? Write about how it affected you, what it revealed about God, and how it strengthened your faith.
- What does your life look like now as you walk with Christ, specifically knowing you are loved and a child of God?

If anyone hasn't made a decision to respond to Christ yet, allow them to use this time to reflect on their thoughts and questions about salvation.

## FACILITATOR NOTES

### Wrap up (5 minutes)

#### Response Form

- “Before we close, I want to encourage you to fill out the response form. It’s a great way for us to stay connected and for you to share any questions, insights, or prayer requests you have after today’s session.”
  - *It can be found in your workbook via QR code. The link is [thechapel.com/begintwo](https://thechapel.com/begintwo)*
- “Please fill it out now! It should only take a minute or two!”

#### Church Center App

- “If you haven’t already, I encourage you to download the Church Center app. It’s a helpful tool for staying updated with what’s happening at our church, connecting to groups and events, and managing your involvement.”
  - If you need help downloading the App, I’m happy to help you!
- “It’s a great way to stay plugged in, and I’d love for you to explore it this week! You will also have access to Begin resources and our Begin group via this app.”

#### Baptism Questionnaire

- “If you haven’t yet been baptized – or were baptized as an infant - we would love for you to fill out this Baptism Questionnaire. We’ll be discussing baptism further during week three of Begin, but if you have any questions before filling out this form, I’d love to chat with you further after class!”
  - “You can fill out the questionnaire at [thechapel.com/baptismform](https://thechapel.com/baptismform)”. There is also a QR code in your workbook.

#### Practice and Reflection Section

- “As we go into the week, I encourage you to spend time in the *Practice & Reflection* section of your workbook. This includes:
  - Daily Scripture readings and prayer prompts to help you grow closer to God.
  - A space to reflect on today’s teaching and how you can apply it in your life.
- Take just a few minutes each day to engage with these activities. They’re designed to help you grow in your walk with Christ.”

#### Reminder of Next Week

- “Finally, don’t forget that our next session is next week at the same time and place. We’ll be exploring the incredible truth that you are adopted by God into the family of God, which builds on everything we’ve learned today.”
- Close in prayer
- “I can’t wait to see you all next week. If you have any questions or need anything between now and then, feel free to reach out!”

## Practice & Reflection

This week, take some time to practice what you've learned and to spend time in reflection.

### Daily Reading & Prayer Plan

Each day includes a short passage from Scripture, a reflection question to help engage with the text, and prayer prompt. As you prepare to engage the Scripture daily, consider the following steps:

1. Read - read the passage slowly - consider reading it 2-3 times, and reading it out loud at least once
2. Observe - ask questions of the text. Who wrote this text? Who are they writing to? What's happening? Where is this happening? When? Write down your observations.
3. Apply - Consider how you should respond to what you've read. Answer the reflection prompt provided if that's helpful
4. Pray - thank God for what He's shown you, and pray to faithfully live it out. Use the provided prayer prompts to guide you.

#### **Day 1: 1 John 3:1-10**

- *Reflection Question:* What does it mean to you to be called a child of God, and how does that shape your identity?
- *Prayer:* Father, thank You for loving me so deeply that You call me Your child. Help me to live in a way that reflects my identity in You, turning from sin and embracing Your love and truth each day.

#### **Day 2: Romans 8:31-39**

- *Reflection Question:* How does this assurance of God's love encourage you in moments of fear or doubt?
- *Prayer:* Lord, thank You for the unshakable promise of Your love. When I face fear or doubt, remind me that nothing can separate me from Your love and that I can rest securely in Your care.

#### **Day 3: Psalm 136:1-12**

- *Reflection Question:* How do you see God's steadfast love at work in your life today?
- *Prayer:* God, I thank You for Your enduring love that never fails. Help me to see the evidence of Your love in my life and give me a heart of gratitude for all You've done.

#### **Day 4: John 15:9-17**

- *Reflection Question:* What does it look like to remain in God's love daily? How can you love others in the same way?
- *Prayer:* Jesus, thank You for loving me with the same love the Father has for You. Teach me to remain in Your love and to show that love to others through my actions and words."

#### **Day 5: Zephaniah 3:14-17**

- *Reflection Question:* How does knowing that God delights in you change the way you view your relationship with Him?

- *Prayer:* Lord, thank You for rejoicing over me with love and delight. Help me to see myself through Your eyes and to rest in the truth of Your constant presence and care.

### **Day 6: Ephesians 3:14-21**

- *Reflection Question:* What aspect of God's love stands out most to you, and how can you embrace it more fully in your life?
- *Prayer:* Father, I pray to know the vastness of Your love in my heart and mind. Fill me with the fullness of Your presence so that I may live boldly in the assurance of Your love."

### **Day 7: Isaiah 43:1-7**

- *Reflection Question:* How does knowing you are God's treasured possession give you confidence and peace?
- *Prayer:* Lord, thank You for calling me by name and claiming me as Your own. Help me to trust in Your promises and to walk in the confidence that I am loved, redeemed, and precious to You."

### Next Step Goal

Write a new next step goal. Remember, setting a "Next Step Goal" each week is a way to apply what you've learned and build habits that deepen your relationship with Him. Be sure to write a SMART goal: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

### **Writing Your Next Step Goal**

1. Reflect: Think about what God is teaching you this week. Ask yourself:
  - *What is one way I can grow closer to God based on what I've learned? How can I spend time with God daily this week?*
  - *Is there a specific area in my faith where I feel God is prompting me to take action?*
  - *Is there an act of obedience I've been feeling called to take, like baptism, joining a group, or serving?*
  - *How can I practice what I've learned in this week's teaching?*
2. Write Your SMART Goal: Use the space below to write your goal for the week.
3. Plan Your Steps: What do you need to do to accomplish this goal? Write down any practical steps or resources you'll need.

### Scripture Meditation and Memorization

Choose a verse(s) from this week's Scriptures, like Romans 8:38-39, and spend 10 minutes meditating on it each day. Let this truth sink in deeply, reminding you of God's unshakable love. Try and memorize the Scripture. Use the following resource to aid you in your Scripture memorization:

QR code to: <https://thechapel.com/scripture-memorization/>

### **Supplemental Resources**

*This section includes resources to supplement what's learned and discussed in class this week.*

## **Week 3: You are Adopted by God**

## Week 3 Overview

To be adopted by God means more than acceptance—it means we’re brought into His family and share in the privileges and responsibilities of being His children. In the Church, we’re part of a community where we belong, are valued, and contribute to God’s mission in the world.

### **FACILITATOR NOTES**

#### Introduction

##### Welcome

- “Welcome to Week 3 of Begin! I’m so glad each of you is here today. Whether you’ve been with us since the start or this is your first session, you’re in the right place. This class is all about growing in our faith and understanding our identity in Christ.”
- “Over the past weeks, we’ve explored what it means to be saved and loved by God. Today, we’ll focus on the powerful truth that you are adopted by God, brought into His family, and given a place where you belong.”

##### Attendance and group reminder:

- “Before we get started, let’s take a moment to check in.
  - “Let’s go around and share your name and one thing you’ve enjoyed or learned so far from Begin. I’ll take attendance as we do this.”

##### Set Expectations for the Class (1 minute)

- “This is a safe space to ask questions, share insights, and grow together. There’s no pressure to have all the answers—we’re all learning and walking this journey of faith.”
- “As always, today’s session will include a video teaching, group discussion, and activities that help us process and apply what we’re learning. The goal is to discover what it means to live as part of God’s family.”

##### Introduction to the Workbook (1 minute)

- “Your workbook is here to guide you through each week’s teaching. It includes notes, reflection prompts, and activities to help you dive deeper throughout the week. It’s also a space to develop your grace story—a personal way to articulate God’s work in your life.”
- “This week’s sections explore what it means to belong to God’s family and live out our identity as His children.

##### Icebreaker (8 minutes)

- “To start us off, let’s do a quick icebreaker. Share your name and answer one of these questions:
  - *What did you learn last week? What did you learn through this week’s practice and reflection activities?*
  - *What comes to mind when you hear the word adoption?*
  - *How does it make you feel to think of yourself as adopted by God?*

##### Introduction to the Video (2 minutes)

- “Today’s video focuses on God’s adoption of us as His children. We’ll explore what it means to be part of God’s family, how it changes our identity, and how we can live out this incredible truth in our daily lives.”
- “As you watch, think about how adoption reflects God’s love and purpose for you. Use your workbook to take notes on anything that stands out or feels meaningful to you.”
- “Let’s turn our attention to the screen now as we begin exploring the life-changing truth that we are adopted by God.”



## Teaching

### PLAY VIDEO

QR CODE to video

[thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator](http://thechapel.com/nextstepsfacilitator)

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** A 60 second timer will be on the screen. Participants should answer these question during that time:

*What does belonging look like and feel like to you? How does knowing that you belong to God's family impact your faith journey?*

The video will automatically continue.

### **Section 1: The Biblical Concept of Church**

The Church is not a building but a living community of God's people, united in Christ. It is described in Scripture as the priesthood of believers, the temple of God, the family of God, and the body of Christ. Each of these markers highlights a unique aspect of the Church's identity and mission. As a royal priesthood, believers have access to God through Christ and serve Him in worship and intercession. The Church, as the temple, is where God dwells and is made known to the world. As God's family, we are adopted as His children and relate to one another as brothers and sisters. Finally, as the body of Christ, we are interconnected, with Jesus as our Head, each playing a vital role in His mission.

#### **Key Points:**

- The Priesthood of Believers:
  - All believers share in Christ's priestly status, giving them direct access to God (1 Peter 2:9).
  - We are called to offer spiritual sacrifices, intercede for others, and represent Christ in all aspects of life (Romans 12:1-2, Hebrews 13:15-16).
- The Temple of God:
  - The Church is where God dwells and where the world encounters Him.
  - Believers collectively form a living temple that reflects God's presence to others.
- The Family of God:
  - We are adopted as children of God, knowing Him as Father and relating to Jesus as our elder brother (John 1:12-13, John 20:17).
  - As God's household, we live as brothers and sisters, caring for and supporting one another in Christ (1 Timothy 3:14-15).
- The Body of Christ:
  - The Church is one body with many parts, united by the Spirit and led by Christ as the Head (1 Corinthians 12:12-14, Colossians 1:18).
  - Each member has a vital role to play, contributing to the growth and mission of the Church.
- These markers reveal the Church as a vibrant, interconnected community with a divine purpose.
- Every believer has a role in reflecting God's love, serving others, and advancing His kingdom.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Pause the video. Guide the participants in a discussion of the following questions (5 minutes)

- Which of the markers (Priesthood of believers, temple of God, family of God, Body of Christ) stand out to you? Why?
- How do these truths shape the way you see the Christian life?
- How do these truths shape the way you see your commitment to the local church?

After 5-6 minutes, wrap up the discussion and play the video.

## **Section 2: Our Role in the Church**

Every believer has been given spiritual gifts by the Holy Spirit to serve and build up the Church. These gifts are not for personal benefit but to strengthen the body of Christ and fulfill its mission. Discerning and using your gifts involves identifying the needs you see, recognizing your passions, taking advantage of opportunities, and observing where God produces fruit through your service. Serving in both formal and informal ways allows you to contribute meaningfully to the Church's health and growth. Each believer's role is indispensable, and God uses our gifts to glorify Him and bless others.

### **Key Points:**

- Spiritual gifts are unique abilities given by God to each believer to serve the Church (Romans 12:6-8). These gifts contribute to the health and growth of the Church and are essential to its mission.
- Questions for Discovering Your Gifts:
  - *What needs do you see in the Church?*
    - Reflect on areas you feel burdened to address, such as teaching, caring for others, or welcoming newcomers.
  - *What do you have a passion to do?*
    - Pay attention to the areas where God has given you a deep desire to serve.
  - *What doors are open to you?*
    - Consider the opportunities currently available in your season of life and step into them.
  - *Where have you seen God change lives through your service?*
    - Reflect on feedback and visible fruit from your ministry efforts to discern where God is using you.
- Spiritual gifts are often discovered by actively serving in a variety of ways. As you serve, you gain clarity about how God has gifted you.
- Serving doesn't have to be limited to formal roles within the church. Use your gifts in everyday life—teaching in small groups or with your family, encouraging others, or offering practical help.
  - Every act of service, whether formal or informal, contributes to the Church's mission and glorifies God.
- Each believer's gifts are vital to the Church's health and mission. Your service strengthens the body of Christ and brings glory to God.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** At the conclusion of section 2, the video will transition to Austin talking with a Campus Pastor, then Austin will set up a time of discussion. Pause the video, and facilitate discussion of the following prompts:

- *What does it mean to you to be adopted by God?*
- *How can you more fully embrace your role in the church as a family member?*

- *What are some practical ways you can connect or serve in the church?*

After 5 minutes of discussion, play the video.

### **Section 3: Growing in Community**

Being part of the Church means living and growing in community. The early Church modeled this in Acts 2:42, devoting themselves to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer. Gospel Community is more than Sunday gatherings; it's about believers intentionally sharing life, encouraging one another, and living out the truth of the gospel. These communities prioritize authentic relationships, encouragement, accountability, prayer, and mission. When we invest in Gospel Community, we deepen our faith, grow spiritually, and reflect Christ's love to the world.

#### **Key Points:**

- Acts 2:42 highlights the early Church as a community devoted to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer.
- Characteristics of a Gospel Community:
  - Centered on the Gospel:
    - The gospel shapes decisions, relationships, and actions.
    - Members remind each other of gospel truths in challenges and celebrate hope in Christ.
  - Built on Authentic Relationships:
    - Transparency is encouraged, creating a safe space for sharing struggles, joys, and prayer requests.
    - Vulnerability and mutual support are prioritized.
  - Encouraging and Accountable:
    - Members build each other up spiritually and hold each other accountable in their walk with Christ.
    - Accountability partners help track growth, celebrate victories, and pray for areas of struggle.
  - Living on Mission Together:
    - The community looks outward, sharing Jesus' love with others and inviting them into the faith.
    - Acts of service and outreach reflect the gospel in action.
  - Focused on Prayer and Spiritual Growth:
    - Prayer strengthens the community's connection to God and each other.
    - Members study Scripture together, seeking wisdom and growth in faith.
- The goal of Gospel Community is to deepen personal faith while collectively showing the transformative love of Jesus to the world.
- Relationships within the Church lead to spiritual maturity and create a Christlike community that impacts others.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Pause the video. First, prompt participants to write down their answer individually to this prompt:

- *What steps can you take to grow deeper in relationships with others in your Church?*

After 1-2 minutes, encourage participants to discuss their response with those around them. Allow for 5 minutes of discussion, and then play the video.

#### **Section 4: Baptism and Communion**

Baptism and communion are two essential practices within the Church that reflect our faith and deepen our connection to God and one another. Baptism symbolizes our union with Jesus in His death and resurrection, signifying that we have died to sin and been raised to new life in Christ (Matthew 28:19). Communion, or the Lord's Supper, is a regular reminder of Christ's sacrifice, where we remember and proclaim His death until He returns (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). These sacred practices strengthen our spiritual lives and affirm our identity as members of the Church.

##### **Key Points:**

- Baptism signifies being united with Christ in His death and resurrection, representing the death of our old selves and our new life in Him. It is an act of obedience and a public declaration of faith (Matthew 28:19).
- In our congregation, baptism is also a requirement for Church membership.
- Communion is a sacred practice where we remember Christ's sacrifice and the new covenant in His blood (1 Corinthians 11:24-25). It serves as a proclamation of Christ's death and a reminder of His promise to return.
- Both practices deepen our relationship with God and strengthen our bond with the Church community.
- They are vital expressions of faith and central to our spiritual lives as members of the Church.

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** Pause the video. Facilitate discussion of the following prompt:

- *If you've been baptized, how did it impact your faith journey? If you haven't, what questions do you have about taking this step?*

Allow for 5 minutes of discussion, and then play the video.

#### **Section 5: The What and Why of Church Membership**

Church membership is a meaningful commitment to a local body of believers, reflecting the New Testament model of connected, active participation in the Church. It's about more than attending services—it involves engaging in the Church's life and mission, submitting to its leadership, and fostering accountability and growth. Hebrews 10:24-25 encourages believers to meet regularly, support one another, and spur each other on to love and good works. Membership formalizes this commitment, creating a mutual relationship where the Church and the individual commit to one another in accountability and fellowship.

##### **Key Points:**

- The New Testament emphasizes believers' active connection to and participation in the Church community.
- Christians are called to regularly gather, encourage one another, and spur one another on toward love and good works (Hebrews 10:24-25).
- Membership formalizes a mutual commitment between a believer and a local church.
- Membership signifies a commitment to live out the Christian life in community, participating in the Church's mission and submitting to its leadership.

- Membership provides a context for accountability, spiritual growth, and deep relationships. It establishes a framework where both the Church and the individual can invest in one another's spiritual well-being and mission.
- The New Testament rejects the idea of "lone-ranger" Christianity; believers are always connected to a larger community.
- Membership is an intentional way to identify with a local Church and live out faith in fellowship with others.

### **Grace Story**

**FACILITATOR NOTE:** *Each week after the video concludes and before we wrap up, give some time for participants to write out and refine their grace story. Here is this week's prompt. Give 10 minutes for participants to work on this.*

Encourage participants to take 5-10 minutes to continue refining their grace story. Encourage them to write about their personal experience of coming to faith. As they reflect on the story they wrote last week, they should also consider the following prompt:

- How has being part of God's family impacted you? How has being part of the Church strengthened your faith and sense of belonging as an adopted child of God?

If anyone hasn't made a decision to respond to Christ yet, allow them to use this time to reflect on their thoughts and questions about salvation.

## FACILITATOR NOTES

### Wrap up (10 minutes)

#### Response Form

- “Before we close, I want to encourage you to fill out the response form. It’s a great way for us to stay connected and for you to share any questions, insights, or prayer requests you have after today’s session.”
  - *It can be found in your workbook via QR code. The link is [thechapel.com/beginthree](http://thechapel.com/beginthree)*
- “Please fill it out now! It should only take a minute or two!”

#### Church Center App

- “If you haven’t already, I encourage you to download the Church Center app. It’s a helpful tool for staying updated with what’s happening at our church, connecting to groups and events, and managing your involvement.”
  - If you need help downloading the App, I’m happy to help you!
- “It’s a great way to stay plugged in, and you’ll be able to find ways to stay connected to our church, especially as you continue moving forward in the next steps process.”

#### Baptism Questionnaire

- “If you haven’t yet been baptized – or were baptized as an infant - we would love for you to fill out this Baptism Questionnaire. We’ll be discussing baptism further during week three of Begin, but if you have any questions before filling out this form, I’d love to chat with you further after class!”
  - “You can fill out the questionnaire at [thechapel.com/baptismform](http://thechapel.com/baptismform)”. There is also a QR code in your workbook.

#### Practice and Reflection Section

- “As we go into the week, I encourage you to spend time in the *Practice & Reflection* section of your workbook. This includes:
  - Daily Scripture readings and prayer prompts to help you grow closer to God.
  - A space to reflect on today’s teaching and how you can apply it in your life.
- Take just a few minutes each day to engage with these activities. They’re designed to help you grow in your walk with Christ.”
- “There’s also one final section that you can spend time interacting with this week: the final reflection. On this page you will write out your full grace story as though you were going to share it with another person. You’re prompted to write it in 5-10 sentences, so that you can deliver it in 1-2 minutes. In addition, you’re prompted to reflect on what your next step is, now that you’ve walked through Begin.”

#### Next Steps

- “Finally, as we conclude these Begin classes, let’s discuss your Next Step. If you’ve not been baptized, but you would like to be we have a Baptism class. During Baptism class, we discuss Baptism further, discuss your grace stories, and discuss some logistics related to baptism at our church. I can help you get registered for the next class, but if you haven’t filled out the Baptism Questionnaire yet, this is your immediate next step.”
- Everyone’s next step is Belong (whether you’ve been baptized, want to be baptized, or haven’t been baptized).

- “Now that you’ve completed Begin, you’re ready to move on to Belong. Belong is designed to help you better know our church, and to help you find your people and place within our church. Our next Belong class is [DATE TO BE PROVIDED BASED ON SCHEDULE]. You can register for Belong at [thechapel.com/belong](http://thechapel.com/belong). Go ahead and do that now! By participating in Belong, you’ll be able to start the process required to serve here, as well as to join a community group.”
- “Thank you so much for joining us for Begin. It’s been an honor to walk through this content alongside you.”
- Close in prayer

## Practice & Reflection

*This week, take some time to practice what you've learned and to spend time in reflection.*

### Daily Reading & Prayer Plan

Each day includes a short passage from Scripture, a reflection question to help engage with the text, and prayer prompt. As you prepare to engage the Scripture daily, consider the following steps:

1. Read - read the passage slowly - consider reading it 2-3 times, and reading it out loud at least once
2. Observe - ask questions of the text. Who wrote this text? Who are they writing to? What's happening? Where is this happening? When? Write down your observations.
3. Apply - Consider how you should respond to what you've read. Answer the reflection prompt provided if that's helpful
4. Pray - thank God for what He's shown you and pray to faithfully live it out. Use the provided prayer prompts to guide you.

#### **Day 1: Ephesians 1:1-14**

- *Reflection Question:* God's plan of adoption was set before the foundation of the world. His grace, lavished on us through Christ, is the foundation of our adoption as His children.
- *Prayer:* Thank you, Father, for choosing me before time began. Help me to understand the depth of Your love and grace that led to my adoption as Your child.

#### **Day 2: Romans 8:1-17**

- *Reflection Question:* Our adoption comes through Christ's sacrifice and the work of the Holy Spirit. As children of God, we are heirs with Christ and share in His glory.
- *Prayer:* Jesus, thank You for making my adoption possible through Your sacrifice. I am grateful for the Holy Spirit, who assures me of my sonship. Help me live as a co-heir with Christ.

#### **Day 3: Galatians 4:1-7**

- *Reflection Question:* Through Christ, we are no longer slaves but sons and daughters of God. The Spirit of God assures us of our adoption, giving us the confidence to call God, "Abba, Father."
- *Prayer:* Holy Spirit, thank You for confirming my identity as God's child. May I always have the boldness to approach my Father with confidence and affection.

#### **Day 4: 1 John 3:1-12**

- *Reflection Question:* As adopted children of God, we are called to live as His children, displaying love and purity. Our new identity is a reflection of God's great love for us.
- *Prayer:* Thank You, Father, for the privilege of being called Your child. Help me live in a way that reflects Your love and purity, showing the world who I am in You.

#### **Day 5: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21**



- *Reflection Question:* Being adopted into God's family means that we are a new creation in Christ. We are ambassadors for Christ, sharing the message of reconciliation with others.
- *Prayer:* Jesus, thank You for making me a new creation. Help me to live as an ambassador for You, sharing the message of reconciliation with the world.

### **Day 6: Colossians 3:1-17**

- *Reflection Question:* As God's children, we are called to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Our new identity in Christ requires a transformed way of living.
- *Prayer:* Lord, help me to live according to my new identity in Christ. Help me to clothe myself with the virtues that reflect who I am as Your child, living in a way that honors You.

### **Day 7: 2 Corinthians 5:11-21**

- *Reflection Question:* Our adoption into God's family comes with a commission to share the message of reconciliation with the world. We are called to invite others into God's family through the gospel.
- *Prayer:* Father, thank You for entrusting me with the message of reconciliation. Help me to share the good news of adoption with others and invite them into Your family.

### Next Step Goal

Write a new next step goal. Remember, setting a "Next Step Goal" each week is a way to apply what you've learned and build habits that deepen your relationship with Him. Be sure to write a SMART goal: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

### **Writing Your Next Step Goal**

1. Reflect: Think about what God is teaching you this week. Ask yourself:
  - *What is one way I can grow closer to God based on what I've learned? How can I spend time with God daily this week?*
  - *Is there a specific area in my faith where I feel God is prompting me to take action?*
  - *Is there an act of obedience I've been feeling called to take, like baptism, joining a group, or serving?*
  - *How can I practice what I've learned in this week's teaching?*
2. Write Your SMART Goal: Use the space below to write your goal for the week.
3. Plan Your Steps: What do you need to do to accomplish this goal? Write down any practical steps or resources you'll need.

### Community Reflection & Prayer

Who's your community?

1. Identify the places/spaces in your life (home, church, school, work, neighborhood, etc.). Think of all the people within these spaces you interact with. Make a list of these people.
2. Who of these people can encourage you and help you to grow in your faith? Write a list of these names.

3. Choose one of these people to ask to meet you for coffee or a meal. Share what you're learning about God.

### Pray for your community

Take 10 minutes to pray for a few people in your community. Consider reaching out with an encouraging message or prayer. This is one way of actively engaging in your role as a family member in God's household.

[Take your Next Step](#)

Baptism Questionnaire



Register for Belong



### **Supplemental Resources**

*This section includes resources to supplement what's learned and discussed in class this week.*

## Final Reflection

As you complete this workbook, take some time to review your weekly reflections. Reflect on how God's love, salvation, and adoption have shaped your journey. What did you learn from these classes?

### Grace story

Write out your full grace story, combining elements from each week, focusing on:

- Your experience of salvation.
- Personal experiences of God's love.
- How belonging to His family has impacted you.
- Consider how you can integrate Scripture into your story.

Write out your grace story in 5-10 sentences. As you write, challenge yourself: if you had to share your story with someone in 1-2 minutes, what would you say?

### **Challenge:**

Commit to at least one practice from this workbook to carry forward after this course—whether confession and repentance, Scripture meditation, community connection, or writing next step goals. Also challenge yourself to continue reading and praying daily - not because you have to, but because you have a desire to continue to know God and experience His love. Let these practices help you continue growing in your identity and confidence in Christ.