

# **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 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.*