

# Begin Workbook



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## INTRODUCTION

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

### How to Use This Workbook

- **Watch the Videos:** Start each week by watching the video that introduces the weekly theme.
- **Write and Reflect:** Use the reflection prompts to journal your thoughts and insights.
- **Engage with Activities:** Each activity is designed to help you apply what you're learning. One recurring activity will guide you in building out your grace story—an account of God's work in your life.
- **Week-to-Week Connection:** Each week builds on the last, so as you complete each section, reflect on how the themes interconnect, creating a holistic picture of your identity in Christ.

*At the end of each session, you'll fill out a completion form. Your facilitator will provide you with the link to the form. This form will capture your attendance for the class, will be a forum to provide feedback, and most importantly, will be a time for you to reflect on class content.*

Lastly, if you haven't already, we invite you to download the [Church Center App](#). Through this app, you'll be able to communicate with your Begin cohort, and better connect with all that's happening at The Chapel.

## **WEEK 2: YOU ARE LOVED BY GOD**

## **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.

## **Opening Questions**

*Take a moment to reflect on this past week and today's theme and discuss the following with questions with those around you:*

*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?*

## Teaching

### 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.

#### 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?

#### 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?*

### 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.*

## **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.

*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.)*



### **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 fills us with God's presence, 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 God, a member of the Trinity, and He lives in us, and guides, strengthens, and empowers 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.

At the conclusion of class, please fill out this form



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

## **Teaching Notes**

*As you watch the video, use this page to take notes.*

## Grace Story

Every person that has repented of their sin, surrendered their life to Jesus, and asked to begin a personal relationship with Him, has a **story to tell**. In our context, we like to refer to this as our grace story. Whenever people encounter Jesus, He leaves them with a story to tell. God's grace has invaded our lives; we exist to share it.

Take 10 minutes to continue refining your grace story. Write about your personal experience of coming to faith. As you reflect on the story you wrote last week, 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 you haven't made this decision yet, use this space to reflect on your thoughts or questions about salvation.

## 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.
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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:



<https://thechapel.com/scripture-memorization/>

### **Supplemental Resources**

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