



belong

WEEK 1



week one

Who we are



Table of Contents



INTRODUCTION

WEEK 1: WHO WE ARE

Overview	5
Opening Questions	5
Teaching	6
Teaching Notes	16
Next Step	17
Practice and Reflection	17



Overview

This session explores the mission, vision, and values of The Chapel, rooted in the Gospel and God's call for the Church. We'll examine the history of The Chapel, its statement of faith, and its structure and governance, providing a foundation for understanding our identity as a local church. Together, we'll reflect on how the gospel shapes our mission to ensure every man, woman, and child has repeated opportunities to hear and see the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Opening Questions

Before we begin, process your thoughts and feelings as you embark on this course. Discuss the following questions with those around you.

What drew you to attending Belong?

What drew you to The Chapel, and what has been the most meaningful part of your experience so far?

What excites you most about being part of a church community?



Teaching

Section 1: Church History

The Chapel's story began in 1961 with a small group of believers committed to saturating their community with the Gospel. Over the decades, The Chapel has grown into a multi-campus church with a clear mission to ensure that every man, woman, and child has repeated opportunities to hear and see the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Today, The Chapel continues to expand its impact through geographic intentionality, community outreach, church planting, and partnerships.

Key points:

- **Founding Vision (1961):**
 - » Established as the Metropolitan Chapel of Buffalo by a committed group of believers.
 - » The founding mission focused on gospel saturation and disciple-making in their community.
- **Growth and Expansion (1990s - current):**
 - » Transitioned into The Chapel with an emphasis on regional outreach.
 - » Relocated to the CrossPoint campus in Getzville to better serve Western New York.
 - » Expanded to multiple campuses to effectively reach more people across the region.
- **Current Mission:**
 - » Operates as one church in four locations, united under a single mission: gospel saturation.
 - » Values geographic intentionality, with campuses serving specific communities while advancing the same vision.
 - » Beyond Sunday services, The Chapel engages in community outreach, church planting, leadership development, and strategic partnerships to make a lasting impact.

Key points:

- **Your Role:**
 - » Every member of The Chapel contributes to the mission of the gospel saturation in Western New York and beyond.
 - » As part of this growing story, you are invited to play a vital role in helping others encounter the Gospel and experience its life-changing power.

Section 2: The Gospel and its Influence on Mission

The gospel is the foundation of The Chapel's identity, mission, and vision. Through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the gospel reveals God's grace, reconciling humanity to Him and transforming every aspect of life. This good news drives The Chapel's efforts to create disciples who live out the truth of the gospel, impacting their homes, communities, and the world.

Key points:

- **The Gospel's Message:**
 - » The Gospel proclaims reconciliation with God through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.
 - » It is a message of grace, emphasizing God's love and forgiveness rather than human works.
 - » This truth shapes every aspect of The Chapel's mission and vision.
- **Mission and Gospel Saturation:**
 - » The Gospel provides the "why" behind The Chapel's mission to ensure every man, woman, and child hears and sees the Gospel.
 - » This mission aligns with God's desire that all people come to know Him (1 Timothy 2:3-4).
 - » Gospel saturation goes beyond conversion, focusing on creating disciples who live out their faith and transform their environments.



- **Gospel-Centered Ministry:**

- » The Gospel is foundational for both unbelievers and believers, fostering ongoing growth.
- » It compels love for God and others, as seen in Matthew 22:37-39.
- » Every ministry effort—from community outreach to Sunday gatherings—reflects the holistic call of the Gospel to meet physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.

- **Partnerships and Global Vision:**

- » Through Kingdom Come, The Chapel collaborates with churches and ministries to advance the Gospel beyond local borders.
- » These partnerships mobilize resources and people to reach unreached areas and underserved populations.
- » The Gospel inspires The Chapel to fulfill the Great Commission, making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20).

- **The Gospel's Central Role:**

- » The Gospel is not merely a starting point but the foundation, fuel, and focus of The Chapel's mission.
- » It unites the church in purpose, transforms lives, and glorifies God as His love is shared with the world.

How does knowing the gospel influence how you interact with your family, coworkers, or neighbors?

What specific opportunities do you have in your daily life to reflect Christ's love and share the Gospel?

What steps can you take this week to intentionally live out the mission of gospel saturation in your life?



Section 3: Our Beliefs & Values

At The Chapel, our beliefs are grounded in God's Word and shape everything we do as a church. These beliefs, reflected in our statement of faith, provide the foundation for our mission of gospel saturation and our values as a local church. By exploring these core truths, we deepen our understanding of who God is, what He has done, and how we are called to live as His people.

Exercise

Instructions: Review our Statement of Beliefs. Open your Bible, and for each statement, identify at least one Scripture reference that supports it. Note the scripture reference in your workbook.

Statement of Beliefs

Bible

We believe the Bible (both Old and New Testaments) is God's Word to us. Although written through human authors, the Holy Spirit supernaturally guided its writing. The Bible is inspired by God, which literally means that the Scripture is God-breathed. It is free of error in its original writings and is our final authority in all areas of life.

SCRIPTURE: _____



God

We believe in the one true God. God has eternally existed in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. They are three, and yet one; distinct, and yet the same. This mysterious union of co-equal persons is what we call the Trinity.

Father: He is the creator and ruler of everything. Before the world was created, the Father planned to send his Son, Jesus, to redeem mankind. God is all-knowing, so nothing that happens surprises him; in fact, everything in human history works together to accomplish his good plan for the world.

Son: Jesus is God the Son. He is the Messiah (or, Christ) that was promised to Israel. Because Jesus is God, he is eternal. He came to earth, was supernaturally conceived through the Holy Spirit, and born through Mary, who was a virgin. He lived a sinless life but was crucified according to God's plan of redemption. Jesus defeated death (the greatest enemy) by his bodily resurrection. Hundreds of people were eyewitnesses and saw Jesus alive. After this, he ascended into Heaven, where he exists in a glorified body. Jesus now acts as our advocate and intercedes for us with God the Father.

Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. He is not just a force or a power, but the actual Spirit of God. He convicts the world of sin, leads us to right-living, and warns of impending judgment. He is a deposit in the life of every believer, guaranteeing our future inheritance – eternal life. The Spirit empowers the preaching, teaching, and understanding of the Gospel. We receive gifts from the Spirit that enable us to build up the body of believers and work towards the mission of God in our world.

SCRIPTURE: _____

People

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God as male and female. The first man and woman (Adam and Eve) sinned, and as a result, they would experience physical death and spiritual death – which is separation from God. Since each human being is their descendant, we are all born with a sinful nature. Our natural inclination is to sin (for example, no one had to teach us how to lie), and we sin with our thoughts, our words, and our actions. This sin has severed our relationship with God, and unless it is dealt with, will result in eternal death and separation from him.

SCRIPTURE: _____

Salvation

We believe that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world. The death and wrath that Jesus experienced is what we rightly deserve because of sin, but he is our substitute. Everyone who puts their faith completely and totally in Jesus are declared, “Not Guilty,” by God because of Jesus’ sacrifice. Everyone who receives Jesus by faith experiences new life. The Bible refers to this as “a second birth” or as being “born again.” For all who do this, they become God’s children and receive eternal life.

SCRIPTURE: _____



Last things

We believe in the existence of a personal devil. He has several titles and names, all describing how wicked and rebellious he is: the deceiver, the accuser (the literal meaning of Satan), a liar from the beginning, and the Enemy of our souls. He seeks to destroy the lives and souls of people, just as he did in the beginning with Adam and Eve. God permits the Enemy to have a certain amount of power and influence in the world, but it is limited. One day, God will judge Satan and all his demons, along with everyone who rejects Jesus. They will suffer because God will not shrug off their unrepentant wickedness. Their punishment is too terrible for words, but the Bible says they will eternally be punished in a lake of fire.

We believe that the blessed hope of believers is the imminent return and appearance of Jesus. We long to see him, because he is our Savior. After this, he will set up a Kingdom that will never be destroyed or overturned.

We believe in the future, bodily resurrection of all humanity. For those who belong to Jesus, they will live with God forever when Heaven is joined with a redeemed earth. For those who reject Jesus, they will be separated from God in Hell forever. In this final act of mercy, God gives them what they've always wanted: to be independent of him.

SCRIPTURE: _____

The Church

We believe in the Church, which is made up of all believers in Jesus Christ throughout the world. The Bible refers to the Church as the Body and the Bride of Christ. We belong to him. Our mission is God's mission: to preach the Gospel of Jesus in the whole world, and announce that people can be reconciled to God.

We believe in the local church, which is one expression of the larger Body of believers. Those who belong to the local church have a responsibility to make an investment there with their time, skills, resources, and money.

We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion) are to be a regular and integral part of the local church. We baptize with immersion because it symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. We celebrate the Lord's Supper to remember Christ's sacrifice for us. The bread and the cup are the symbols of the new covenant, representing Jesus' body and blood.

SCRIPTURE: _____

Reflect

How does grounding these beliefs in Scripture deepen your understanding of them?

Which belief resonated with you most, and why?

How can these truths shape the way you live out your faith daily?

The Four Outcomes

At The Chapel, discipleship is about growing in Christlikeness and living on mission to reach every man, woman, and child with the Gospel. Four outcomes—intimacy with God, Christlike relationships, spiritual gifts, and grace story—serve as key markers of spiritual growth and alignment with the Church's mission. These outcomes help us live out our faith authentically and make an impact for God's kingdom.

Intimacy with God:

- A close, personal relationship with Jesus is essential to the Christian life.
- Grows through practices like prayer, Scripture reading, worship, and fellowship.
- Aligns our lives with God's will and equips us to live missionally.

Christlike Relationships:

- Encourages authentic connections marked by love, forgiveness, encouragement, and accountability.
- Challenges us to reflect Christ in how we relate to people and steward our resources.
- Asks the question: How would Jesus live my life if He were me?

**Spiritual Gifts:**

- God uniquely equips every believer with gifts to serve the Church and advance the Gospel.
- These gifts are for building up the body of Christ, not personal benefit.
- Helps individuals contribute meaningfully to the Church's mission and growth.

Grace Story:

- Every believer has a unique story of God's transformative grace.
- Sharing these stories testifies to God's love and power, encouraging others in their faith.
- Your grace story is a tool for pointing others to Christ and glorifying Him.

What practices have helped you deepen your personal relationship with God? How does prioritizing time with God change the way you approach your day-to-day life?

What makes a relationship "Christlike"? How have you experienced this in your church community?

Have you identified your spiritual gifts? What are some practical steps you can take to discover or better use your spiritual gifts?

Have you shared your grace story with anyone? What was the experience like and how did it impact you and the other person?



Section 4: Structure and Governance

The Chapel's governance model reflects biblical principles of accountability, unity, and shared responsibility. It combines strong leadership with active congregational involvement to faithfully pursue the mission of reaching every man, woman, and child with the Gospel. This structure fosters transparency, collaboration, and a commitment to glorify God and serve the community.

Key points:

- **Leadership Structure:**
 - » Overseers serve as a board providing spiritual and financial accountability, prayer, and encouragement to the pastoral staff.
 - » Pastoral staff, including the Lead Pastor and campus pastors, shepherd the congregation and oversee ministry operations.
 - » Deacons meet practical needs within the Church body, ensuring care and resources are distributed effectively.
- **Congregational Involvement:**
 - » Members vote on key decisions, such as affirming board members.
 - » Serve in ministry roles, reflecting the value of every believer's contribution to the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).
 - » Support the Church's mission through time, skills, and financial resources.
- **Purpose of Governance:**
 - » Ensures unity and accountability among leaders and members.
 - » Empowers The Chapel to fulfill its mission of gospel saturation locally and beyond.



Teaching Notes

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

Next Step

This week, take a next step to belonging at The Chapel.

Are you currently in gospel-centered community? If not, let us help you find a community group! A community group is a small group of people that gather outside of a Sunday morning service. In groups, authentic, Christ-like relationships are formed through fellowship, spiritual conversations, prayer, and accountability.

Visit thechapel.com/joinagroup and fill out the **Community Group interest form**.

Practice and 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. Interpret** - based off the observations you just made, what is the intended meaning of this text?
- 4. Apply** - consider how you should respond to what you've read. Answer the reflection prompt provided if that's helpful
- 5. 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: Matthew 28:11-20

- Reflection Question: How does Jesus' command to go and make disciples impact the way you live out your faith and share it with others?
- Prayer: God, I pray for boldness and opportunities to share the Gospel with others. Thank you for your presence in my life. Give me guidance in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Day 2: Matthew 22:34-46

- Reflection Question: How can you deepen your love for God and others in practical ways today?
- Prayer: God, help me to love you with my whole being, and to love others selflessly. I pray for opportunities to live out these commands in my relationships and daily actions.

Day 3: 1 Timothy 3:1-13

- Reflection Question: How do these qualities of leadership challenge you in your own walk with God and in your role within the church community?
- Prayer: God, give me wisdom and strength to embody these qualities in my life. Raise up leaders in our church who reflect your character and who continue to grow in integrity and service.

Day 4: Acts 2:29-47

- Reflection Question: How can you cultivate a deeper sense of community and devotion to God's Word, prayer, and fellowship with other believers?
- Prayer: Jesus, thank you for the gift of community in the church. I pray for a heart that is committed to growing in fellowship, prayer, and service, and for the church to continue

- Prayer: Jesus, thank you for the gift of community in the church. I pray for a heart that is committed to growing in fellowship, prayer, and service, and for the church to continue growing in faith and love.

Day 5: Ephesians 2:1-22

- Reflection Question: How does the truth that Christ has brought you from death to life and reconciled you to God and others change the way you view your identity and relationships?
- Prayer: God, thank you for your grace and for reconciling me through Christ. I pray for a deeper understanding of my unity with others in the body of Christ. Help me to live out your grace and reconciliation in my relationships.

Day 6: Philippians 3:1-14

- Reflection Question: What are some things you might need to let go of in order to pursue Christ more fully?
- Prayer: God, help me to press on toward the goal of knowing you more deeply. I pray for the strength to let go of anything hindering my relationship with Christ and to focus on eternity.

Day 7: Matthew 24:36-44

- Reflection Question: How can you live today in a way that reflects your readiness for Christ's return?
- Prayer: God, I pray for a heart that is always prepared for Christ's return, living with urgency and faithfulness. Help me to stay watchful and focused on His purposes as you await His coming.