

# WEEK 10:

## WHY IS THE CHURCH IMPORTANT?

*Objective: Understand that we are designed to be part of a church body, belonging, growing, serving, and worshipping within it. Gain insight into the symbolism and importance of baptism and Communion. We will also be saying a special prayer over each person in the group, helping them see God working in their lives as they courageously live out their purpose.*

### PRAYER POINTS

- Everyone in Rooted would have embraced the opportunity to share their faith story with the group before this week's group time.
- As you celebrate Communion tonight, you would have a special time as a group to celebrate what God has done in your lives the past ten weeks. As you remember His death and resurrection through the taking of the Lord's Supper, remember the amazing gift He provided for each of us.
- Every person would leave having been prayed over and able to embrace the truths shared about them and prayed over them. They would fully embrace what God has done in their ten weeks through Rooted and have a greater understanding of their purpose from God.
- Anyone who has not been baptized would want to be baptized at the Rooted celebration.

### LEADER PREPARATION

- We will model the Communion Experience during the training meeting. Communion supplies will be provided for your group time.
- Pray about how you would like to lead communion. You may want to reflect on one of the following passages: *Luke 22:14-20, Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, or 1 Corinthians 11:20-30*
- Set aside a good amount of time to review your notes from all ten weeks. Look at their gifts, strongholds and calling. (Tip: keep large sticky notes for each person in your Facilitator Guide to collect information on each member throughout the weeks.)
- Bring index cards and write down words of affirmation shared by the group about each person. You can use these as you pray a blessing over each person. You can also give the cards to each person at the celebration.
- If members have not shared their faith, challenge them to continue to look for those opportunities as God leads. Talk about the difference it makes when we are

intentional in wanting to be used by God, and how He reveals opportunities we would not otherwise see.

## GROUP TIME

### 30 minutes - Welcome and Introductory Questions

Theme: **Connecting with your church**

- What makes you feel connected to the church, like you belong?
- What does it feel like to worship in community with other believers?
- What does worship mean to you?

### 75 minutes - Affirmations

- Take turns affirming each person in the group for what you have seen God do in their lives during this ten-week journey.

### 15 minutes - Communion and closing prayer

Take the bread and cup and give each person a blessing as they receive it. (This is another good opportunity to have your selected Rooted leaders or Life Group leaders give blessings as well. An example of a blessing you can give is, “This is Christ’s body and blood shed for you. He died that you may live.”

*Note about baptism: For those being baptized, remind them to wear dark clothing and bring a towel. When they are being baptized, have them bend their knees, cross their arms in front of their chest. Ask the person, “Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and died for you?” Let them answer. Then say, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” You will lay them down in the water and then lift them up out of the water.*

## NOTES ON GROUP AFFIRMATIONS

You have been with your group for ten weeks now and hopefully have an insight into their struggles, breakthroughs, prayer lives, hearts' desires, and have seen authentic transformation in their spiritual journeys. This day is to celebrate all of that and more!

God calls us all to things bigger than ourselves, but we tend to move away from the big things God calls us to. This is the exact reason why what you are doing in this session is so important. This is why you have taken notes the past ten weeks and we have said to lead with the end in mind. This is a great blessing as many have never been prayed over in this manner. It will propel them into the calling and purpose God has been putting on their heart but they have been too timid to move toward.

In his book, *The Language of Blessing*, Joseph Cavanaugh III defines what a blessing is:

Blessings are prophetic in that they communicate the heart, mind, and will of God for an individual. They connect us with our Creator's dream for us. Words of blessing affirm and empower God-given intrinsic attributes, such as personality, gifting, talents, character traits, and intelligences.

As you pray over each person, you are reflecting their God-given beauty back to them, pointing them toward the heart of Jesus and His calling on their life.

### Pray big, bold prayers

Call out the strongholds that were denounced in each person, the freedom they have, and what it has been replaced with from week five. Then, confirm the spiritual gifts that have been shared from weeks six and seven. (If the group is co-ed, do not name the stronghold, but do affirm what it has been replaced with.) Speak the words of God back to them as you call them to the purpose God has revealed to them.

A great way to start is by having each person in the group affirm what they have seen happen over the ten weeks in the life of the person you are about to pray for. This will give you a break in between praying for each person so it will not become mechanical. Often someone in the group will have seen God do something in the life of the individual that you might have missed.

### The world tears us down

The words we speak to one another are powerful and life giving. After you pray over each person, ask them what they heard. They will repeat it in a soft, quiet voice or may have missed it. Make them say it again until they get it! Don't let them leave without the clarity of what you have seen God do and what He is calling them to. Don't worry about your words being perfect. The power of the Holy Spirit will guide you.

After praying over each person, you will present them with a card that captures their journey as it was revealed to you. As you compose your thought on this card, remember to use the notes you have taken about each person since the first session. These notes will give you the insight you need to bless them and to commission them in their next step of faith and to a lifestyle worthy of their calling.

Below are examples of what your prayer and your note might look like. Reminder: if you have a co-ed group, do not name the stronghold specifically, but affirm the freedom they are living in Christ.

## **SAMPLE NOTES:**

Joan,

You are a treasure to God. You are free from the strongholds of fear and the lie that you are not worthy. You are instead strong and courageous in Jesus, and you are the loved daughter of your Creator. Your value cannot be measured in His sight. You are gifted through the Holy Spirit with organization, compassion and helps/service. With those gifts, along with your passion for the homeless of this community, you will minister to those who are on the streets, helpless and hopeless, providing both spiritual care and physical resources for their needs.

Sharon,

It has been amazing to watch you discover your identity in Christ for the first time. I have been honored to pray with you to receive Jesus as your Savior and stand with you as you have denounced sinful habits of your life, changing from a cohabitation lifestyle to one which honors God in both appearance and action. You are called to reconcile relationships of those broken by abuse and to minister to those whose hurts are raw and deep. God will be with you now as you move into this ministry.

Steve,

These past ten weeks have shaped your faith and it has been a pleasure to walk this journey with you. I stand with you as you declare victory over the stronghold of impurity and control. I will continue to pray for you to surrender to God daily. You have an amazing passion for the marginalized youth in Santa Ana and will be a shepherd to those lost in the system. Your caring nature and gift of compassion will serve you well as you serve with God's heart, in the work He has for you.

## WORKBOOK REVIEW

### Why is the Church Important?

The focus this week is on solidifying the value of the Church — its functions and each person's role within it — and continuing to grow and move into a lifestyle ignited in Rooted by establishing or joining a Life Group.

#### Day 1 All in the Family

- What makes you feel like an attendee at church?
- What makes you feel like someone who belongs to your church?

#### Day 2 Responding to God

- Where in your life do you worship in spirit and truth?
- What sometimes keeps you from authentic worship?

#### Day 3 Ceremonies

- What are your thoughts about the Lord's Supper?
- If you have been baptized, describe your experience and the events leading up to it.
- If you haven't been baptized, what are your thoughts about it?

#### Day 4 Maturing in Christ

- Have you decided to continue with your Rooted group as a Life Group? If not, where is your need for community being met?
- How can your Life Group join in with God's mission of restoration in your surrounding community and beyond?
- In what ways will your relationship with God be strengthened by committing to a Life Group that cares for each other and the world around them?

#### Day 5 Looking Back, Looking Ahead

- Think about your Rooted experience. What are some highlights? What are one or two truths you want to take away from this time?
- How have you heard God's voice?
- What's the next step you will take toward fulfilling the purpose God has planned for you?