



Huddles

Sermon Series, This is Us

Week 5: Our History & Our Destiny

Learning to love and follow Jesus—together—by His strength, in every day life.

What are huddles at Foundations?

- Groups of 3-8 people (or 3-4 couples) that meet for one hour per week at a time and location of your choosing. Larger groups should plan for 75 minutes.
- Huddles last for 8 weeks. At the end of each 8-week session, you can keep your group, add to your group or even change groups & topics.
- While gathering on Sunday is vital to spiritual growth, so is connecting with others to encourage one another, discussing what it means to follow Jesus and praying for one another. These practices are detailed in our RHYTHMS course (which is not necessary to take part in huddles, but highly recommended).

Our Mission is to bring the extraordinary life-changing message of Jesus Christ to a lost and broken world.

- Huddles are one way we prepare to do this very thing, and we can't do that unless our lives are being transformed by Him.
- Hence, the goal of every session is that you will grow more like Jesus in some small way.
- In order to do this, we will focus on God's Word, encourage one another and commit to praying for one another.
- Each week, there are individual rhythms we encourage that will help you "love and follow Jesus."
- Similarly, there are corporate rhythms that help us in our spiritual formation.
- Consistent practice of these rhythms is part of the holistic development of disciples, and this booklet is designed to touch on that development.
- This holistic framework will give structure to your meeting time.

The individual rhythms overview (for those that haven't taken the Rhythms course):

Prayer: Talking to God and listening to Him via His Word, His Spirit-Filled people and His creation. If you don't know how to pray, a good start is the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 5.

Abide in the Word: Reading the Bible, prayerfully, asking God to show you what He wants for you. A good practice is to read with a pen & journal to write your thoughts as He leads them.

Silence: choosing to avoid speaking in order to listen to what He might want to say to us. Another **Solitude:** avoidance of interaction with others in order to be alone with Him. Silence enhances this.

Reflection (especially effective at the end of the day, maybe before sleep): Take some time in stillness to experience His presence, tell God things you're thankful for, make note of where you experienced Him today--or where you didn't—and note instances of loving your “neighbor” well—or failure to do so. Ask God for what He may want for you in the day tomorrow.

Other rhythms that will likely be practiced less frequently: Fasting (food; if there's an area you are seeking specific guidance); giving joyfully (financially as an act of worship) and rest (setting aside time to enjoy your life and choosing to refrain from work)

The corporate rhythms overview (for those that haven't taken the Rhythms course):

Worship gathering: A time for our family to be together to participate corporately in the rhythms of worship together.

Participation in community: A time to engage in huddle, as well as other forms of being together as a church family (such as concerts, conferences/classes, events, etc.)

Lord's Supper: A chance for our family to reflect on the person and work of Jesus and look forward in hope to His coming again in a symbol of eternal unity.

Baptism: A one-time action of a declaration of faith in Christ. It is our hope that everyone be baptized, as well as choosing to enjoy the celebration of others who choose to do so.

Using your gift to serve the Body: We have been given a gift to help the body of Christ come to maturity in faith, and we benefit by your presence.

Having a ministry of love for neighbor: We choose to exemplify the abundant life in order to fulfill our mission of bringing the extraordinary life of Jesus Christ to a lost and broken world.

Prayer, Day 1

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
- Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
- You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.
- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray aloud the following prayer from Paul's letter to the Colossians:
- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray using Paul's prayer of thanksgiving for others as an example (Colossians 1:3-12): You can use this to pray for yourself and for others.
 - Be thankful for their faith and changed lives (1:3-4).
 - Ask God to help them know what He wants them to do (1-9).
 - Ask God to give them deep, spiritual understanding (1:9).
 - Ask God to help them live for Him (1:10).
 - Ask God to give them more understanding/knowledge of Himself (1:10).
 - Ask God to give them strength and patience for endurance (1:11).
 - Ask God to fill them with joy, strength and thankfulness (1:11,12).

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Abiding in the Word, Day 1, Ephesians 2: 1-10

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
 - Ephesians was written by the apostle Paul who was under house arrest in Rome for preaching the Gospel.
 - It was likely written between 60-62AD, to the church at Ephesus—a thriving metropolitan center famous for a temple that allowed for “worship” involving the practice of sex.
 - A major theme in the book is unity. The nation of Israel was having to come together with Jesus followers not of Israel—a group they were not even to eat with or associate with.
 - Chapter 1 notes our relationship to Jesus, which defines our identity, and His being God above all gods, and all things subject to Him.
- Questions for Reflection:
 - Verses 1-3 give us four things that you were before coming to know Jesus. Can you discover them?
 - Verses 4-7 provide a list of things that we ARE now. Can you discover those?
 - When Pastor Carl says he wants us to be people who are exploring God’s grace, could you tell your story of how you responded to that grace, including what you WERE as well as what you ARE now after finding that grace?

Prayer, Day 2

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
- Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
- You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.

- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray using the Lord's Prayer as an outline for your own words to express...

Tell God how thankful you are for the privilege of calling the King of Kings "our Father," & that He listens and hears.

God is worthy of honor and worship

We should acknowledge that things on earth are not what they are supposed to be, and that we should ask God to be aware of His presence and strive to see what He wants this world to be. We should let others see His Kingdom by how we live.

We should be thankful that He provides our basic needs.

We should pray for forgiveness and forgive others

We should name our weaknesses and our temptations, and for the Spirit to strengthen us. We should close with praise.

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Abiding in the Word, Day 2, Ephesians 2: 1-10

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
- Yesterday, we saw the stark difference God’s grace makes in moving us from what we WERE to what we ARE.
- Grace = undeserved favor + divine enablement.
- The word for “workmanship” in verse 10 is the same word we get “poem” from. It literally means an excellent example of craftsmanship, or—more accurately—a masterpiece.
- Questions for Reflection:
- Since you are a masterpiece, how might this override the negative perceptions of yourself that comes from the culture?
- How does being a work of art influence how you live, especially how you treat others?
- Pastor Carl used an example of eating tongue instead of steak. How might this analogy apply when you think of your identity in Christ as defined in 4-7 & 10 against living like verse 1-3?

Prayer, Day 3

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
- Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
- You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.
- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray using the ACTS method as an outline for your own words to express...
- Adoration (a time of worship): don't be afraid of "artistic expressions" here, or to use Psalms or hymns or other forms of praise.
- Confession: We all fall short and miss the mark. Confession of sin helps us our relationship to God.
- Thanksgiving: Simply tell God what you're thankful for.
- Supplication: Asking God for needs of the world, our country & leaders, our church, and anything and everything else. God wants to hear from you.

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Abiding in the Word, Day 3, Colossians 3: 1-11

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
- Colossians was written by the apostle Paul to the church in Colossae. It was more of a village in contrast to the city of Ephesus, which we looked at yesterday.
- Very clearly, this letter was written to remind their church not to fall victim to false teachings and false teachers.
- This chapter follows reminders about our identity in Christ as well as reminders of who God is.

Questions for Reflection:

Pastor Carl noted that after exploring God’s grace (even though you’re never really finished with that!), we should embrace God’s grace and draw closer to Him. Since these verses again start with the reminder of our identity in Christ. How might that influence your ability to draw closer to Jesus?

Much of the spiritual life is choosing what you will choose to “put off.” What are some things in this list that would be wise for you to drop?

Prayer, Day 4

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
- Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
- You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.
- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to pray using the breath method to pray:
- Simply take a Psalm and breathe in as you read the first line, and then exhale on the second.
- Take deep, long, slow breaths.

You can also do this with just one verse of Scripture, and almost every Psalm can be done this way. Try to focus on the ones that focus on God and/or resonate with where you are at the moment.

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Abiding in the Word, Day 4, Colossians 3: 12-16

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
- In the section we read yesterday, we are reminded that because of who we are in Jesus, we should choose things to put off (the “tongue” in Pastor Carl’s message).
- Again, note the importance of allowing Jesus to define who we are, and now there’s a positive side to that: things we are to put on. (verses 10 & 11 from yesterday, as well as verse 12 from today)
- Consistently, Paul noted that your identity should influence how you behave.
- Questions for Reflection:
- Make a list of all the things we are told we should “put on” in these verses. If you were to pick two to work on this week, which ones would be most helpful to you & why did you choose those?
- Would you describe yourself as a person who peace dwells in? A person that abides in the Word? A loving person? If not, what are some specific things that you could do to move toward becoming that kind of person?

Prayer, Day 5

- If you are comfortable praying as a conversation with God, find some focused time to do so.
- Find a place where you can have silence and solitude and talk to God and be attentive to how He leads your thoughts and emotions.
- You may find it helpful to write down what you talked with God about and/or how He answered in a journal.
- If you are new to prayer, or struggle with focus, you may want to simply pray using a Psalm...they are really great prayers! Find one that you resonate with, and pray it aloud:
- Simply take a Psalm, such as Psalm 23 or 51
- Pray aloud, even if in a whisper, slowly and with concentration on the words.
- Try to be attentive to the thoughts that come to mind and discern if those may be something God is trying to tell you.

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Abiding in the Word, Day 5, Luke 10: 25-37

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
 - A teacher of the Law was wanting to take a poll about Jesus’ view of what it means to inherit eternal life.
 - Jesus response would’ve likely been a surprise to someone highly educated since the answer to His question was for the academic leader to—in effect—say what he learned in kindergarten.
 - The teacher’s answer is known as The Shema, highlighting the desire to love God and love their neighbor.
 - Jesus tells a story about what it means to love the neighbor, and the person doing so wasn’t a religious leader but rather a member of a group of people despised by the religious elite of the day.
- Questions for Reflection:
 - Pastor Carl mentioned that the Dead Sea exists because there’s no outflow from it...rivers flow into it, but nothing flows out of it. He likened that to us in that we won’t fully live life unless love flows out of us.
 - What emotions does that reality bring out in you when you learn your best life will truly be lived when you show love to others? Why do you think you respond that way?
 - Why do you think it’s hard to love people who are different than you? How do these verses encourage you to do so?

Prayer, Day 6: A Time for Reflection

Traditional time of Examen	A Few Thoughts on This Method
<p>This is a version of the five-step Daily Examen that St. Ignatius practiced.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Become aware of God’s presence.2. Review the day with gratitude.3. Pay attention to your emotions.4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.5. Look toward tomorrow.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Breathe & slow down. Ask God to make you aware of His presence and to bring to mind moments of your day to focus on.2. Walk through your day and give thanks for areas where you saw God “show up” and for His blessings.3. The things you feel when you review often highlight areas where God wants you to focus and what he wants to teach you. Often this results in confession when you see your emotions out of line with walking in the Spirit.4. Ask God to show you moments where you loved others well (or, conversely, He may bring to mind an area you didn’t). Give thanks or ask forgiveness as warranted.5. Think through your day tomorrow and ask God what He may be calling you to do or be in the upcoming day.

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Abiding in the Word, Day 6, Luke 10: 25-37

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
- Pastor Carl, in his first sermon on 11/11/11, said, “Our church is not about having you come here. Our job is to have you come here, equip you, and then do everything we can to come alongside you so you can go our and transform our community, our nation and the world.”
- From the very first sermon, our church has focused on each person playing their part to change their spheres of influence.
- Questions for Reflection:
- What are your sphere’s of influence after your home & your work? Where else are you connecting with those who don’t know Jesus?
- How might your gifts, talents & passions intersect to make a difference in your home? Your work? The other places you connect with those that don’t know Him?

Huddle Meeting: (suggested time = 30 mins)

General Check-In (10 minutes)

Describe your sleep habits this week.

Describe your dietary habits this week.

Describe your exercise habits this week.

Describe your development in intellectual curiosity this week (keeping up with current events, artistic endeavors, learning new skills, hobbies, etc)

Emotional Check-In (10 minutes)

Using the SACHET wheel, describe how you're doing emotionally right now. You may want to write down some of these to pray for your huddle during the week.



Rhythms Check-In (10 minutes)

Describe your experience with the individual rhythms this week.

Describe your experience with the corporate rhythms this week.

How can the huddle encourage you this week in these areas? Or...

...How can you encourage the huddle this week in these areas?

Huddle Meeting: Discussion for Growth

10 Minutes:

What is something you feel God truly taught you this week?

20 Minutes (based on Ephesians 2, Colossians 3 & Luke 10):

Is your identity tied more to your job, social media, society's expectations or more tied to what God says in Ephesians? Why did you answer the way you did?

What are some things you need to "put on?" What are some things you need to "put off?"

Regardless of your faith level, if you were to make any changes in your life based on what we read this week, what would that look like?

Additional Helps & Resources:

<https://www.planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/html/nt/1corinthians/1corinthians.htm>

This is an excellent resource from a Dallas Seminary professor who taught all the books of the Bible in his career. They are Dr. Tom Constable's class notes. Very academic, but free & very insightful. Simply scroll the PDF until you get to 1 Corinthians 13.

https://www.amazon.com/Crazy-Love-Overwhelmed-Relentless-God-ebook/dp/B00C9QGYN0/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2J8KVLIL0L3ZO&dchild=1&keywords=crazy+love+francis+chan&qid=1633634609&sprefix=crazy+love+f%2Caps%2C339&sr=8-1

This is an easy, enjoyable read about the difference about what love looks like when it's lived out loud by popular pastor & author Francis Chan.