



Huddles

Women in the Bible, Week #6

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 Ephesians
 - 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 (from Ephesians 1: 15-22): You can use this to pray for yourself and for others.
 - Tell God you love him.
 - Ask God for spiritual wisdom & that He would reveal Himself in ways you can know him more.
 - Pray that you know the hope of His calling you.
 - Pray that you would know the riches of glory of the inheritance of the saints.
 - Ask God that you would know the power He gives to those who believe.
 - Praise Him for being the God who is above all rule and authority and has the name above all other names.
 - Thank Him for being head of the Church.

Time in the Word, Day 1, Judges 16: 1-9

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
 - This story is of a great Israelite warrior, Samson, and his weakness regarding a woman named Delilah.
 - There are some negative traits in Delilah that we can learn from in this story and then we will look at the book of Proverbs that reiterate these traits.
 - Just before this story, Samson had some incidents with the Philistine army. The Israelites, under rule of the Philistines, tried to capture Samson to turn him in, which failed. Samson killed over 1,000 people using only the jawbone of a donkey as a weapon.
 - Samson is noted for a focus on physical appetites, whether hunger, thirst, sex, etc.
- Questions for Reflection:
 - Delilah plays on Samson's love for her to manipulate him. Are there areas of your life when your love has a hidden agenda? What steps can you take that will help you be truly loving toward your neighbor?

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.

Time in the Word, Day 2, Judges 16: 10-14

- Background & Insights on the Reading:

- There had been one failed attempt by Delilah to aid in the capture of Samson. She likely had connections to the Philistines and it's obvious that Samson's feelings for her were far beyond his using reason to feel betrayal.
- This second attempt follows a consistent pattern: she asks for the secret to his strength, he gives her a false answer, and then an attempt to capture him which fails.
- Each attempt does contain a different method to capture him, though.
- The first attempt was bow strings. The second attempt was ropes strong enough to pull a cart or cattle. The next attempt (tomorrow) will show weaving his hair. As an aside, the bounty Delilah was being offered would be around \$15 million in today's dollars.

- Questions for Reflection:

- Have you ever given thought to what your "price" is for stepping outside honoring God?
- What do you think pushes people from being tempted to actually doing the act?

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.

Time in the Word, Day 3, Judges 16: 15-22

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
- There had been three failed attempts by Delilah to aid in the capture of Samson. She likely had connections to the Philistines and it's obvious that Samson's feelings for her were far beyond his using reason to feel betrayal.
- The first attempt was bow strings. The second attempt was ropes strong enough to pull a cart or cattle. The next attempt (tomorrow) will show weaving his hair. As an aside, the bounty Delilah was being offered would be around \$15 million in today's dollars.
- Questions for Reflection:
- Samson apparently had so much confidence in his ability to overcome any threat. Can you describe a time when you were overconfident and failed? Why were you surprised?
- What are some of the traits you see in Delilah that you don't want to emulate?

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.

Time in the Word, Day 4, Proverbs 5: 1-6

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
 - This section of Proverbs follows earlier warnings against the dangers of chasing the money, following evildoers and the damage illicit sex can have on your life. This is the beginning of elaboration on these topics.
 - This is a warning from a father to a son, but it provides insight into the character traits of women like Delilah.
 - He stresses the importance of truly hearing & listening = using discretion.
 - This is the foundation for falling to temptation and falling short of the abundant life.
- Questions for Reflection:
 - Have there been times when you've tried to manipulate others with your words? How did that end up? Can you understand how this turns "bitter?"
 - Do you "ways" follow the "path of life?" What do you think the phrase "her ways wander yet she doesn't know it?"

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, and this week you might want to go with Psalm 55
- 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.

Time in the Word, Day 5, Proverbs 6: 16-26

- Background & Insights on the Reading:
 - This section of Proverbs follows earlier warnings against the dangers of chasing the money, following evildoers and the damage illicit sex can have on your life. This is the beginning of elaboration on these topics.
 - This section follows warnings about failing to seek and live a life of wisdom, against making promises you can't keep, against laziness, against evil men (who live a life of deceit in speech and action, because their hearts are perverse).
 - God wants us to avoid being like the abominations listed, and instead be people who regard the instruction of parents, which is based in God's truth.
- Questions for Reflection:
 - God's word and focusing on it helps you fight temptation before it becomes an act. How do you think this "works" in real life?
 - A famous theologian once said that inward realities manifest themselves in our actions. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

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.

Time in the Word, Day 6, Judges 16: 23-31

- Background & Insights on the Reading:

- In this section, we see a contrast between the pagan gods of the Philistines and the honor of the true God. They celebrated in honor of Dagon, who is thought to be the father of the god Baal.
- The temple is filled with important leaders of Philistia, and they are there to be “entertained” by Samson. This is likely simply parading the captured warrior in chains and other forms of public humiliation.
- Contrasting their calls for humiliation, Samson calls out to God to come to his aid. Notice God answered the prayer. The reason He did certainly isn't because Samson was “good enough” to deserve God's provision.

- Questions for Reflection:

- Have you ever felt like you didn't deserve to call out to God? Think about whether you did or didn't in that moment and why you did or didn't.
- Why do you think God answered Samson's call?

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 Samson & Delilah)

Delilah certainly had her price to betray her husband and use manipulation to do so. Are there ways in which you try to “manipulate” God or others? What might you do to be able to be more forthright in dealing with both?

Do you truly desire to seek wisdom (as in Proverbs) of God to live on the right path? If so, what does that “look like” with regard to specifics? If not, what is holding you back?

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?