



## Discussion Guide: Down 5 - Grow

*"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." — Isaiah 43:19 (ESV)*

### 1. Icebreaker & Connection (10-15 mins)

- **The "Fast-Forward" Button:** If you could instantly master one skill or achieve one major goal right now without having to put in the months or years of practice, what would it be? (e.g., speaking a new language, playing an instrument, running a marathon).
- **Discussion:** Why do you think we, as a culture, are so captivated by quick results and rapid growth?

### 2. Looking at the Message (15-20 mins)

#### The Lesson of Biosphere 2

In 1991, researchers in Arizona built "Biosphere 2"—a massive, sealed ecosystem. Inside, trees grew much faster than they do in the wild because they were perfectly sheltered. However, when they reached maturity, they would suddenly snap and fall over.

The problem? **There was no wind.** Trees need wind to tug on them, which forces their roots to grow deeper into the soil.

- **Question 1:** How does this story change the way you look at the "winds" (trials, stress, or delays) in your own life?
- **Question 2:** Gavin mentioned that *"we live in a world where we want to enjoy the fruit before we grow the root."* Where do you see people (or yourself) trying to get the appearance of success before doing the hard work?

#### The Biology of a Seed

When a seed germinates, the very first thing to appear is the *radicle* (the initial root). It grows downward to anchor the plant and find water before a delicate shoot ever pushes upward. Furthermore, forest biology tells us that a tree's root system generally matches the mass of its canopy. If a tree loses its roots, it has to drop its branches.

- **Question 3:** If the "canopy" represents the outward ministries of our church (Kids, Youth, Tribes, etc.), why is it dangerous for the canopy to grow faster than the root system?

### 3. Digging into the Word (20 mins)

**Read Acts 6:1-7 together.**

- **Question 4:** In this passage, the early church was growing rapidly, but a practical problem arose with distributing food to widows. Satan tried to use *distraction* to get the Apostles to abandon prayer and the Word to focus on administration. How do you see the enemy using "good distractions" to derail spiritual growth today?
- **Question 5:** The word *deacon* comes from the Greek verb *diakoneō*, which means "to serve." Jesus famously used this word when He said He came "*not to be served but to serve*" (Matt 20:28). What does it tell us about God's Kingdom that the highest leadership offices are defined by serving?

#### Word and Deed

Our church functions on two pillars: **Word** (Elders) and **Deed** (Deacons). Deacons are lead servants who support the elders by managing facility needs, benevolence, and care needs (hospital visits, prayer, etc.) so the Word can go forth unhindered.

- **Question 6:** Gavin shared transparently about how the rapid growth of our church has left leadership stretched thin (missing meetings, delayed responses). How does hearing that reality highlight our collective need to establish stronger "roots" as a church family?

### 4. Personal Application & Next Steps (10-15 mins)

As a church, our Deacon Nomination process opens **TODAY** (at [tribes.church/deacons](http://tribes.church/deacons)) and will run for the next 30 days. We are looking for mature, committed, and stable men who meet the biblical qualifications of 1 Timothy 3 and Acts 6.

Let's bring this home personally. Go around the circle and answer one or more of these questions:

1. **Am I rooted in Christ?** Is my personal relationship with God receiving the deep, quiet nutrition it needs, or am I just trying to produce "fruit" on my own strength?
2. **Am I rooted in the local church?** Am I just consuming the fruit of this church, or am I helping to build the root system?
3. **Who can we nominate?** As you look around our church or this small group, who comes to mind as a godly "lead servant" who embodies the heart of a deacon? (Commit to praying about nominating them this week).

### 5. Closing Prayer

*Take prayer requests from the group, and close by praying specifically for:*

- *The spiritual root system of your small group and the church.*
- *The 30-day deacon nomination process, asking God to raise up the right lead servants.*
- *Protection, wisdom, and relief for the Elders and pastoral staff as the church grows.*