

ROOTS: THE BACKSTORY

OVERVIEW:

It's been said that the New Testament is a commentary on the Old Testament. If that's the case, having a basic knowledge of the Old Testament historical narratives and knowing what people in and around Jesus' time thought about those stories matters. They provide a beautiful context that will help the New Testament come to life in a powerful way. We hope that through this series we explore the stories in a way the ancients would have heard them so that they impact our lives as they would have impacted the lives in Jesus' day.

LEARNING AND GROWING - FROM ROWS TO CIRCLES:

At North Summit, we believe that we learn in rows on Sunday mornings and that we grow in circles - in small relational environments with other people - becoming more like Jesus. Throughout this series, we highly encourage each person to identify a few people to get together with each week and make the commitment to have conversations around the Sunday teaching and to pray together. This isn't the time to re-teach the sermon but rather to facilitate conversation, knowing that we grow when we are in relationship with one another. We can't do this alone; we were created to do this with others.

CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR REAL RELATIONSHIPS:

Real relationships involve trust, honesty, transparency, and vulnerability between people. For that to happen in a group setting, everyone must know there is safety and trust. Below are some guidelines that we highly recommend sharing and restating at the start of each group time to create a space to be open, vulnerable, and honest.

Group Guidelines:

- **Confidentiality:** What is said here stays here.
- **Silence is okay:** Sometimes people need more time to process a question before responding. Embrace the awkward silence as a tool for a better response.
- **No fixing:** We aren't here to solve problems or counsel anyone but rather to listen and share.
- **No rescuing:** Responses can be uncomfortable, to the point that we want to interject to make it stop. Fight against the urge to interject, knowing the Holy Spirit might be working on the person.
- **No cross talk:** Only one person should be talking at a time.
- **Be self-aware:** Don't talk too much; don't talk too little. Also, be aware of your body language. Make sure you are appropriately engaged.
- **Listen:** Listen with your eyes, ears, and appropriate body language. Listen carefully.
- **Use "I" statements:** Answer for yourself, not for someone else.

FACILITATING YOUR GROUP:

As the Group Facilitator, your role will be to facilitate the group's conversation by asking questions as well as to keep the group within the guidelines that produce a healthy environment for sharing. As the Group Facilitator, be sure to:

- Share and uphold the Group Guidelines.
- Be vulnerable and transparent.
- Facilitate the conversation and keep it going (don't lecture or re-teach).
- Be friendly.
- Ask clarifying follow-up questions.
- Listen intently.

Use the **Discussion Guide** on the opposite page to facilitate your group conversation

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Date: 6/6/2021

Weekly Scripture Reading: Genesis 12-13; Acts 7:1-8

1. Open with **PRAYER**.
2. Share **GROUP GUIDELINES** (*see other side*).
3. **FACILITATE CONVERSATION** using the questions below:

Sermon Observation Questions:

- What stood out to you from this past week's sermon? Explain.
- What, if anything, from the sermon confused you? Explain.
- What from the sermon invoked an emotion from you? What emotion was it?
- Who was the audience or characters, if any?
- Who did you relate to in the passage, if anyone? Why did you relate to them?
- What does this passage tell us about sinful man?
- What do we learn about God or Jesus from reading this passage? How does that impact the way we love people and love God?

Life-Application Questions (*choose 2-3 questions; ask follow-up questions as necessary*):

- How did Sunday's teaching impact you personally?
- What thoughts concerning the teaching were going through your mind at the time?
- How might the message from this past week impact your circle of influence (e.g., home, work, community, church?)
- How could living out the teaching from Sunday differ from how you've currently lived?
- What might you need to rearrange in your life to apply the sermon?
- Why might applying the principles from Sunday be challenging for you?
- What questions do you have concerning the teaching?
- How might this Old Testament passage reveal Jesus Christ or a need for Christ?
- How could what you learned on Sunday help you disciple someone else?

Take-Away Questions:

- What's your take-away from the teaching and reading?
- Considering the message and reading, what do you believe the Holy Spirit might be calling you to do?

4. Close in **PRAYER**.
Spend time as a group praying big prayers...missional prayers. Talk to God about aligning your heart more to His, putting people in your path to share the gospel with, or making you bolder in your faith. Don't simply pray for colds, surgeries, or daily stressors of life. Pray bigger!