

ROOTED WEEK 5: STRONGHOLDS

Welcome to **Week 5: "Who is Our Enemy?"** This week introduces us to the reality of spiritual warfare. We have seen who God is. Now we will see clearly how who we are in Christ gives us victory over the enemy and enables us to live in freedom.

REVIEW

- If you have done your Prayer Experience, please take time to debrief. Ask people to share how their prayer life has changed since the prayer experience.
- Encourage your group to memorize the weekly memory verses.
- You should have settled on a serve experience by now. If you haven't, make it your goal this week.
- Keep praying about the whether your group will become a Life Group and who the leaders might be.

RESOURCES

- "My True Identity" Bookmarks
- Strongholds information on pages 103-105 (Rooted Participant Booklet)

ABOUT ROOTED WEEK 5

People view spiritual warfare differently. Some think it doesn't exist while others blame the devil for everything that goes wrong in their lives. Not everything that happens to us is spiritual warfare. Some are the consequences of our own sinful desires, wrong choices, poor decisions, and the destructive habits we have adopted over time. Week 5 is a life forming week. As you prepare, ask the Lord to reveal anything in you that needs to be brought before Him. Ask Him to prepare your heart and to give you wisdom and discernment. This will be a difficult week for some of your participants. They will share things they have never had the courage to share before. Some may even realize that they have believed lies about who they are. Expect some emotions! Some may be in tears! Come around them, thank them for their courage to share and affirm who they are in Christ.

Strongholds

A major part of this week's group time will focus on strongholds. **What is a stronghold?** A stronghold is an area in our lives where the devil and our flesh collaborate to create destructive patterns that are the opposite of God's desire for us. Often, strongholds are areas of sin in our lives that we become blind to and that bring

destruction. Many people have no idea they have strongholds. Being able to identify their strongholds is a major step. Others know their strongholds but lack the courage to deal with them. For them, being able to act on their strongholds is a major step.

Facilitation

As a facilitator, this is one of the times when you get to set the pace for vulnerability and depth. Share a testimony of how God has helped you overcome a stronghold from the past. Also, share something you are currently struggling with and ask the group to pray for you. The deeper and more vulnerable you are the deeper and more vulnerable the group will be. But try not to over-spiritualize everything. Pray ahead of time for God to guide your sharing.

Remember that part of breaking a stronghold is replacing it with God's truth. Week 5, day 5 gives a list of strongholds and the corresponding divine truth.

We recommend that you divide the group into genders for the strongholds conversation. If you are the only facilitator, we recommend you identify someone of the opposite gender who is able to lead a group through this conversation. This might actually be a great opportunity for a future leader(s) to step up.

Now, some people may say that they have all the strongholds. Encourage them to identify one or two prominent ones as a starting point. Others may say they have no strongholds. Encourage them to talk to people close to them to help them identify areas of strongholds that they might be blind to.

As you pray to break strongholds, remember that as believers, we live from the place of victory through Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."

As you lead, remember that God is with you and working in and through your group.

Blessings as you serve.

Your group is quickly gelling as people get more comfortable with each other. You may find that people are beginning to address each other directly rather than going through you as the leader. Expect the next two weeks to drive the relationships deeper as people become even more vulnerable.

Announcements

- **Rooted Serve Experience** is coming up fast. Please discuss and agree on your Serve Experience if you haven't done so already. If you'd like suggestions for a serve experience, please get in touch with the Rooted Coordinator.
- Baptism is coming up soon. Look out for details in the latest Move Booklet