

Weekly Study Guide

The week of October 16, 2016

Wish to view the message again? Go to vimeo.com/flcwb. Will you be out of town soon? Watch online at livestream.com/flcwb. Desire to ask Pastor Steve a question about today's message? Contact him at 651.429.5349 215 or sturnbull@flcwb.org.

Daily Readings

MONDAY

Acts 7:54-60

TUESDAY

Acts 8:1-3

WEDNESDAY

Acts 8:4-7

THURSDAY

Acts 8:9-25

FRIDAY

Acts 8:26-40

SATURDAY

Acts 9:1-9

Regular habits of private Bible reading strengthen our relationship with God and teach us how to follow Jesus. In addition to the thematic exercise above, you can use this guide each week to lead you through relevant sections of the Bible.

Group Discussion

CONNECT

Share a bit about your own roots by describing the environment you grew up in (family, geographic area; anything else that shaped who you are today)

LEARN AND APPLY

The series that began this week, Ancient Roots, is designed to help us appreciate and draw strength from our heritage.

- What's the most ancient thing you have ever seen? How did it make you feel?
- This week's worship service was meant to help us connect with the ancient roots of Christianity. Did that experience help you learn or see anything which was new to you?
- Why is it helpful or important to be part of something with ancient roots and ancient ways?

The Apostles' Creed is an ancient summary of basic Christian belief about the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The first Christians knew and experienced the Trinity even before they developed the creeds to describe it. Read **Ephesians 4:1-6** and notice the references to Spirit, Lord (Jesus), and God.

- Has the idea of the Trinity ever been confusing or frustrating to you? What questions have you had?
- In this week's message, Pastor Steve explained the Trinity as more of an experience than a philosophy. How did the first Christians come to understand God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

In the first line of the Apostles' Creed, Christians confess they believe in "God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth."

- How does thinking about God as our heavenly "Father" help you love and trust God?
- Are there things about this picture of God as Father that have been hard for you? What are the challenges that go with this description of God?
- For those of us who have had bad experiences with human fathers, there are Biblical ideas that can help us.
 - ◆ You could begin by approaching God through other images, including those that compare God to a mother. **Read Isaiah 49:15 and 66:12-13.** What does this add to your picture of God?
 - ◆ You might allow Jesus' picture of God the Father to heal your image of God (or of what it means to be or have a father). Jesus taught us to pray "Our Father in Heaven..." and showed us the Father's character himself. **Read John 14:7-11.** What broken images of "father" would you trade out if you learned about God the Father from Jesus?

PRAY AND APPLY

The letters of the apostle Paul are full of prayers, and some of them are explicitly Trinitarian. **Use the words of Ephesians 3:14-21** as a prayer in your group today. You could all read it together, or consider having one person read it out loud (slowly) for your whole group so that others may listen and pray along with their hearts. (If you have children in your group, you might choose to include them in your prayer time this week or any week.)