

TEACHING GUIDE

IN THE GROOVE

Staying in step with the Spirit
(Topic: Spiritual Disciplines)

Sample

OUTREACH

SERIES OUTLINE

In The Groove: Staying in step with the Spirit

OVERVIEW

Write up: "In The Groove: Staying in Step with the Spirit" is a five-week sermon series designed to help people cultivate spiritual disciplines that deepen their relationship with God and align them with the leading of the Holy Spirit. Just like a groove in music keeps the rhythm steady, spiritual disciplines keep us in tune with God's heart and purposes for our lives. Each week will focus on a different discipline—prayer, scripture, community, generosity, and service—encouraging the congregation to live intentionally, with consistency, and in step with the Spirit of God.

Week 1: Constant Conversation

Scriptures: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Luke 11:1-13

Overview:

In this first week, we'll explore the foundational spiritual discipline of prayer, understanding it as an ongoing conversation with God. Prayer is not just a scheduled activity but a continuous communion with the Creator. We'll unpack how to cultivate an attitude of constant prayer and discover the joy, peace, and alignment it brings to our lives. Through Jesus' teaching on prayer, we will learn practical ways to deepen our personal connection with God.

Key Points:

- **The Call to Constant Prayer** (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
 - Prayer as a continuous attitude of communion with God
 - Connecting prayer with joy and thanksgiving
 - Recognizing prayer as God's will for us in Christ
- **Jesus' Teaching on Prayer** (Luke 11:1-13)
 - The disciples' desire to learn how to pray
 - The Lord's Prayer as a model for our own prayers
 - God's eagerness to respond to our prayers

Application:

- Encourage different forms of prayer (adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication)
- Provide practical tips for developing a consistent prayer life

- Challenge listeners to set aside specific times for prayer each day

Week 2: Living Word

Scriptures: Psalm 119:105, 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Overview:

This week, we'll focus on the vital role of Scripture in the life of a believer. The Bible is not just a book of ancient stories but a living word that provides guidance, correction, and training for our daily lives. By engaging with Scripture regularly, through journaling and study, we allow God's Word to illuminate our path and equip us for every good work. We'll explore different ways to study the Bible and practical steps to integrate it into our everyday life decisions.

Key Points:

- **Scripture as a Guide for Life** (Psalm 119:105)
 - The Bible as a source of direction and clarity
 - How Scripture illuminates our path in a confusing world
- **The Purpose and Power of Scripture** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - The divine inspiration of Scripture
 - The uses of Scripture: teaching, rebuking, correcting, training
 - How Scripture equips us for every good work

Application:

- Introduce various methods of Bible study (lectio divina, inductive study, SOAP journal etc.)
- Encourage daily Bible reading and provide reading plans
- Discuss how to apply Scripture to daily life decisions

Week 3: Better Together

Scriptures: Hebrews 10:24-25, Acts 2:42-47

Overview:

Christian community is essential for spiritual growth. This week, we'll explore the importance of meeting together regularly, building each other up in love, and how community helps us stay strong in our faith. The early church provides an inspiring model of fellowship that centered around teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer. We'll dive into how being part of a vibrant church community helps us grow individually and as a collective witness to the world.

Key Points:

- **The Call to Meet Together** (Hebrews 10:24-25)
 - The importance of gathering regularly
 - Encouraging one another in love and good deeds
 - The increased importance of community as Christ's return approaches
- **The Early Church Model** (Acts 2:42-47)
 - The four pillars: teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, prayer
 - The impact of community on spiritual growth
 - How community witness can impact the broader society

Application:

- Encourage participation in small groups or Bible studies
- Discuss ways to deepen relationships within the church
- Challenge listeners to be vulnerable and authentic in their Christian relationships

Week 4: Open Hands

Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Luke 21:1-4

Overview:

Generosity is a reflection of God's character and a spiritual discipline that transforms us from the inside out. This week, we'll examine the biblical principles of giving, not just financially but with our time, talents, and resources. We'll learn from the widow's sacrificial offering and be reminded that the heart behind the gift matters more than the quantity. God promises to provide for those who give cheerfully and sacrificially, allowing generosity to glorify Him and lead to thanksgiving.

Key Points:

- **The Principles of Generous Giving** (2 Corinthians 9:6-15)
 - Giving as a matter of the heart, not compulsion
 - The promise of God's provision for generous givers
 - How generosity leads to thanksgiving and glorifies God
- **The Widow's Offering** (Luke 21:1-4)
 - Jesus' perspective on sacrificial giving
 - The quality of the gift matters more than the quantity

Application:

- Discuss various forms of generosity beyond financial giving
- Encourage listeners to prayerfully consider their giving habits
- Provide practical steps for developing a more generous lifestyle

Week 5: Hands and Feet

Scriptures: Matthew 20:25-28, 1 Peter 4:10-11

Overview:

In our final week, we'll explore the discipline of service as a way to embody Christ's love and mission in the world. Jesus set the ultimate example of servant leadership, and we are called to follow in His footsteps. Serving others with our gifts, talents, and time aligns us with God's mission and brings glory to Him. We will challenge the congregation to identify their gifts and commit to regular acts of service both inside and outside the church.

Key Points:

- **Jesus' Model of Servant Leadership** (Matthew 20:25-28)
 - Contrasting worldly leadership with Christ's example
 - The call to serve rather than be served
 - How service connects us to Christ's mission
- **Using Our Gifts to Serve Others** (1 Peter 4:10-11)
 - Every believer has received gifts from God
 - The responsibility to use our gifts to serve others
 - Serving with God's strength for His glory

Application:

- Help listeners identify their spiritual gifts and passions
- Provide information on service opportunities within the church and community
- Challenge the congregation to commit to regular acts of service

SERMONWEEK 1

Series Title: In The Groove

Week 1: Constant Conversation

Scripture: Galatians 5:25 // 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 // Luke 11:1-4

Write Up: In this first week, we'll explore the foundational spiritual discipline of prayer, understanding it as an ongoing conversation with God. Prayer is not just a scheduled activity but a continuous communion with the Creator. We'll unpack how to cultivate an attitude of constant prayer and discover the joy, peace, and alignment it brings to our lives. Through Jesus' teaching on prayer, we will learn practical ways to deepen our personal connection with God.

Think: Prayer is a continuous conversation with God that aligns us with His will and rhythm.

Feel: A sense of peace and closeness with God as prayer becomes a natural part of our lives.

Do: Commit to making prayer a daily practice, incorporating the A.C.T.S. method. (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication)

Sermon: Good morning! What a wonderful Sunday to gather! I'm so glad you're here as we begin a brand-new series called *In The Groove*. Over the next few weeks, we're going to dive into what it means to stay in step with the Spirit of God and live a life that's aligned with God's purpose.

One of the fundamental truths of this series is that we can live in connection to the God of the universe. Though this may seem daunting or overwhelming, the Bible tells us that when we put our faith in Jesus Christ, we are given the Holy Spirit to live and dwell within us. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts us, empowers us, and guides us. This Spirit is meant to be the engine that drives our daily lives. In fact, in the book of Galatians, Paul writes to the early church about this gift

from God. Galatians 5:25 is where the title of this series comes from as Paul finishes a word about the fruit or results that come from living by God's Spirit.

READ Galatians 5:25

Paul reminds the early church, and us, that walking in step with the Spirit is like staying in rhythm with a trusted dance partner. Like being on the dance floor and ignoring the music or trying to move ahead of your partner, things can quickly become chaotic and awkward. But when we tune into God's rhythm, listen closely, and let God guide us, the movement of life becomes smooth, natural, and even beautiful. That's what it's like to live in step with the Spirit. This morning, we begin our series with the foundational spiritual discipline of prayer as a way of staying in step with God.

Prayer is not just a task we check off our to-do list or something we reserve for special moments. It's an ongoing conversation, a daily communion with our Creator. Through prayer, we open our hearts to God's presence, invite His guidance, and experience the peace and joy that only He can provide. Jesus' teachings on prayer can transform our lives. Whether you're just beginning your prayer journey or looking to grow in your faith, this morning's message is for all of us as we learn to align our lives with the heart of God. This morning is about learning how to get in the groove through the practice of prayer.

POINT #1 – PRAYER IS CONSTANT CONVERSATION

Prayer is the way we tune into God's rhythm. It's how we slow down, listen for His voice, and follow His lead. Just as staying in rhythm requires focus and intentionality, staying in step with the Spirit requires us to cultivate a daily habit of connection with God. Prayer isn't just about speaking—it's about listening, trusting, and letting God guide the day in day out rhythm of our lives.

Story: My wife and I have been married for 15 years. From the very beginning of our relationship, conversation with her came so easily. It wasn't awkward or forced, words just flowed naturally between us. We could talk about anything and everything, and before we knew it, hours had passed. We talked early in the morning, with sleep still in our eyes, and late into the night, long after the rest of the world had gone quiet. Those moments became the foundation of our relationship. The more we talked, the more we learned about each other—our hopes, dreams, fears, and even the silly little things that made us laugh. Those conversations were what helped us build such a deep and meaningful

connection. We were in the groove, fully in sync, and it felt like nothing else mattered in those moments but being together. Looking back, I see how those hours of intentional connection laid the groundwork for the love and partnership we share today.

(Pastor - share this story or a similar one of your own to make the point)

Any married couple will tell you that communication is the foundation of a meaningful relationship. The same thing is true when it comes to our connection and relationship with God. Paul addresses this need for an ongoing dialogue in the letter he wrote to the early church at Thessalonica.

READ 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

These verses are some of the final instructions Paul gives in this letter. These are his marching orders for the church to align with God's will for their lives. First, he tells his listeners and us to rejoice always. To "rejoice always" is to trust that God is working for good, even in situations we may not yet understand. Then he tells them to pray continually. This doesn't mean being on our knees 24/7, but rather cultivating a mindset of continual communication with God. Prayer is meant to be an ongoing dialogue or a heart posture where we remain aware of God's presence in every moment. This kind of prayer includes adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication. Some in the church have narrowed this continual prayer into an acronym that is easily remembered; A.C.T.S. We can stay in the groove with God by using this practical way to live out this continual prayer life.

A - Adoration: Begin by praising God for who He is—His character, power, and love. This sets the tone of worship and reminds us of His greatness.

C - Confession: Acknowledge your sins and seek God's forgiveness, inviting Him to cleanse your heart and restore your relationship with Him.

T - Thanksgiving: Express gratitude for God's blessings, provision, and faithfulness, recognizing His work in your life.

S - Supplication: Bring your requests to God, praying for your needs and the needs of others with faith and trust in His willingness to provide.

The author, CS Lewis states the value in praying A.C.T.S. when he said, "*The moment you wake up each morning, all your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists in shoving it all*