

TEACHING GUIDE

# ROOTED

*BACK TO CHURCH*

Sample  
**OUTREACH**

# SERIES OUTLINE

## **Rooted: Back To Church Sunday Series Write Up:**

*This is a four-week sermon series that includes a vision-casting sermon for Week 1 that is designed to encourage your congregation to invite their friends and neighbors to Week 2. Week 2 is a sermon for National Back to Church Sunday, or any Sunday where many visitors will be present. Weeks 4 and 5 are follow up sermons continuing in the series on spiritual practices that will help you develop deep roots.*

## **Week 1: Rooted In Sharing (Vision Casting Sermon)**

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:19-20 // 2 Corinthians 5:20

**Write Up:** The Good News of Jesus is not meant to be kept to ourselves. The final instruction Jesus gave His disciples was to go into the world and invite others to a saving relationship with God. This happens in our homes, neighborhoods, and around the world as we demonstrate God's love, grace, and mercy to those who are far from Him. Sharing our faith is not an option, it is an expectation. We are ambassadors on behalf of the Kingdom of God and our message is simple—respond to God's love and be reconciled to Him.

**Think:** There is an urgency to sharing our faith because there are many who are far from God and could be lost for all eternity without His grace.

**Feel:** God's grace has invited us to respond to His love. Once we respond, we have a responsibility to share it with others.

**Do:** Prayerfully consider one person in your sphere of influence that you need to share the message of salvation with.

## **Week 2: Rooted In Faith (Event Sermon for National Back to Church Sunday)**

**Scripture:** Colossians 2:7 // John 15:5-8 // Hebrews 10:24-25

**Write Up:** Historically, God has used people who are deeply rooted in their faith to make a difference in the world. The church is a blessing to the world when it is devoted to the truth of God's Word and dedicated to living it out. The fruit of our lives can be directly correlated to the roots of our lives. On what do we build our lives? A life built on Jesus overflows with purpose and meaning. The Bible compares this kind of connection to a vine with many branches. The vine provides the nourishment and power for the branches to produce wonderful things. The same is true with us. When we are connected to the vine (Christ), we experience the full life offered in the Gospel.

**Think:** I cannot live the life God wants for me apart from Jesus. Being part of a faith community helps me grow deeper roots and make an impact on the world.

**Feel:** How would my life change if I were more intentional about growing deep roots of faith and being active in a local church?

**Do:** Take one step toward connecting with Jesus through faith in Him, and consider making church a central part of my life.

### **Week 3:** Rooted In Prayer and Study

**Scripture:** Hebrews 4:12 // Psalm 119:105 // Philippians 4:6

**Write Up:** Spiritual growth is paved with passionate prayer and intentional study of Scripture. These are the avenues given to us to know and trust the heart of God. The more we spend time reading and praying, the more our lives are transformed by the power of God. The church is a place for everyone to gather and hear the life-giving truth of God's Word—a place to unite our hearts in prayer and to allow God to move powerfully in our lives and around the world.

**Think:** The Bible was given to us to share with one another. There is power in wrestling with the Scriptures together and interceding on one another's behalf.

**Feel:** God loves us so much that He has given us ways to connect with Him and to know Him deeply.

**Do:** Carve out intentional time in your daily life to read the Bible and pray. Consider finding ways to do this with people in your church.

### **Week 4:** Rooted In Community

**Scripture:** Romans 12:3-13 // Acts 2:42-47

**Write Up:** Humble living is the key to developing deep and abiding roots in community with one another. The church is a body of believers who each have a part to play in seeing God's Kingdom come to earth. Though everyone is unique in their gifting and calling, working with one another is how the world is transformed. Love is the glue that holds the church together, and love should motivate us to contribute sacrificially with all we have and to share God's Love with the world around us.

**Think:** God gave us gifts and talents to make a difference in the world. We should not waste energy comparing ourselves to others.

**Feel:** We were made for a purpose. When we follow God's plan for our lives, we can help others and live a more enriching life.

**Do:** Discover the gifts God has given you. Consider ways you can use your gifts to bless your community and grow in faith. Share your faith with others.

Sample

# SERMONWEEK 1

**Rooted: Back To Church:** Week 1

Rooted In Sharing

**Scripture:** John 3:16 // Matthew 28:19-20 // 2 Corinthians 5:20

**Write Up:** The Good News of Jesus is not meant to be kept to ourselves. The final instruction Jesus gave His disciples was to go into the world and invite others to a saving relationship with God. This happens in our homes, neighborhoods, and around the world as we demonstrate God's love, grace, and mercy to those who are far from Him. Sharing our faith is not an option, it is an expectation. We are ambassadors on behalf of the Kingdom of God and our message is simple—respond to God's love and be reconciled to Him.

**Think:** There is an urgency to sharing our faith because there are many who are far from God and could be lost for all eternity without His grace.

**Feel:** God's grace has invited us to respond to His love. Once we respond, we have a responsibility to share it with others.

**Do:** Prayerfully consider one person in your sphere of influence that you need to share the message of salvation with.

**Sermon:** Good morning, church. We are so glad you have chosen to worship with us today. This is a very special Sunday as we kick off National Back to Church Sunday. We will prayerfully consider who God wants us to invite next week.

We believe the church is the family of God, and that family has room for everyone. Think about those in your family, neighborhood, school, or workplace that you could invite to church next week. This is also the beginning of a new sermon series called Rooted. When we plant our lives in the right environment, we can grow deep roots that produce good fruit within our lives. There are four main practices that help us grow: rooting ourselves in sharing, rooting ourselves in faith, rooting ourselves in prayer and study, and rooting ourselves in community. The church is the right environment to develop this foundation. When we surround ourselves with people who love God and seek to serve Him, it inspires us to do the same. This week we will discover how we can root ourselves in sharing.

**Story:** Good news is hard to keep to ourselves. We want to share it with as many people as possible. I remember when my wife and I became pregnant with our first son. It took everything in me to not tell everyone I was going to be a dad before we shared it with our

families. I found that whenever I was in a conversation with someone, no matter what the topic, I could always find a way in my mind to segue into a conversation about our baby. I could not wait for the news to become public. As soon as we told our families, I let it all out. I posted it everywhere I could. I told total strangers. The joy I had in my heart about our growing family became something I could no longer keep to myself. (*Share a story about some kind of good news that was so exciting you wanted to let the world know.*)

We find the greatest news that has ever been given to us in the pages of the Bible. It changes everything. It is the source of hope. It is the foundation of our joy. It is the motivation for our care and compassion. There is one Bible passage that delivers this Good News in one single verse, and it is too good not to share.

### **Read John 3:16**

Here is the Good News: God loves the whole world. He loves the whole world so much that He sent His only son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus came to live a perfect life and become a sacrifice on our behalf to cover all of our sins. Sin is, very simply, a sickness that makes us selfish, hateful, angry, destructive, and foolish. Jesus died on a cross to free us from the bondage of sin. That is great news! But this is why we have to share it with everyone: The end of the verse tells us that anyone who believes Jesus died for them will be saved from eternal punishment—separation from God. Belief in this Good News results in eternal and everlasting life. That is too good not to share!

### **Point #1 – Disciples Believe the Good News**

The Bible calls those who hear and believe the Good News disciples. Jesus had 12 men who followed Him and learned from Him during His ministry, and they are known as the 12 disciples. The Greek word for disciple is *mathetes*, which means student or pupil.

**Story:** My favorite teacher growing up was my third-grade teacher Mrs. Thomas. She had a chinchilla and a box turtle in her classroom, which was super cool. But she inspired me to want to learn. The way she shared lessons in the classroom made me want to pay attention, and it had a major impact on my life.

The disciples were students of Jesus—their teacher. He taught them to feed the hungry, heal the sick, and serve those in need. The church today is full of disciples who strive to learn from Jesus and live like Him. I remember the first time someone shared with me who Jesus is and what He has done for me. That little bit of news changed my life, and I began to root myself in the truth of God’s love. Maybe you have never heard the Good News of the Gospel. It is my joy to tell you about it. You are loved by God. Jesus died for you. When you place your faith in Him, you are forgiven and offered a new life. Trust that. Believe that. Live that.

At the end of Jesus's earthly ministry, He gave one final instruction to His disciples. He was returning to heaven but wanted the Good News to be shared with others in His absence.

### **Read Matthew 28:19-20**

Jesus's message in Matthew 28 is very simple: Share the Good News! He did not want his disciples to see God's love as theirs only. He wanted them to share it. He did not want them to see the knowledge of the Kingdom of God as something to keep to themselves. He wanted them to share it. Jesus wanted the disciples to root their lives in sharing the Good News with the world in order to bless all people.

### **Point #2 – Share With Your Life**

Jesus said to make disciples of all nations. The way to make disciples is twofold. First, talk about Him. Bring up Jesus in conversation. Tell others what He has done in your life. Give a testimony of how your life changed because of Jesus. Second, live out the things you have already learned from Jesus. Live with kindness, selflessness, compassion, purpose, and joy. When we learn to live this way, it becomes contagious to others around us. Don't just talk the talk; walk the walk for others to see and believe.

As St. Francis of Assisi said, "Preach the gospel at all times and if necessary, use words."

**Story:** St. Francis once invited a young monk to join him on a trip to preach. Honored to be invited, the monk readily accepted. All day long he and Francis walked through the streets, byways, alleys, and into the suburbs. They rubbed shoulders with hundreds of people. At day's end, the two headed back home. Not once did St. Francis address a crowd or talk to anyone about the gospel. Greatly disappointed, his young companion said, "I thought we were going into town to preach." St. Francis responded, "My son, we *have* preached. We were preaching while we were walking. We were seen by many, and our behavior was closely watched. It is of no use to walk anywhere to preach unless we preach everywhere as we walk." (*Daily Bread, December 15, 1991*)

Our lives are proof to a watching world that Jesus is who He says He is and can do what He says He can do. If someone were to spend 24 hours with you, would they discover that you know God? If someone looked at where you spend your time, attention, energy, and affection, would they see that you love Jesus? We share with our life the truth of our faith.

Jesus said to share the Good News of the gospel with all nations. To be clear, the message of Jesus is meant to be shared with all people despite their skin color, socio-economic background, location on the globe, or political differences. This is a message for everyone.

### **Point #3 – Ambassadors**

In the end, rooting ourselves in sharing means we are constantly looking for ways to give away the grace, mercy, and love that we have found through Jesus. Paul wrote in the New Testament about this high calling we have to be holy sharers and distributors of the Good News.

### **Read 2 Corinthians 5:20**

We are Christ's ambassadors. Similar to when a high-ranking official works in another country, representing his or her own, we are citizens of a heavenly kingdom while living on earth. God has placed us here on purpose, in our neighborhoods, in our offices, in our schools, on our sports teams, and in our families to make an appeal to others on God's behalf. This appeal is urgent! It is time-sensitive because at the end of someone's life, their eternity will be determined by their response to the Good News of Jesus. Because of this, we ought to use everything within our power to reach those around us who are far from God.

**Story:** Every year in Alaska, there is a 1000 mile dog sled race that commemorates an original race to save lives. In January 1926, six-year-old Richard Stanley showed symptoms of diphtheria, signaling the possibility of an outbreak in the small town of Nome. When the boy passed away a day later, Dr. Curtis Welch began immunizing children and adults with an experimental but effective anti-diphtheria serum. But it wasn't long before Dr. Welch's supply ran out, and the nearest serum was in Nenana, Alaska, 1000 miles of frozen wilderness away. Amazingly, a group of trappers and prospectors volunteered to cover the distance with their dog teams. Operating in relays from trading post to trapping station and beyond, one sled started out from Nome while another, carrying the serum, started from Nenana. Oblivious to frostbite, fatigue, and exhaustion, the teamsters mushed relentlessly until, after 144 hours in negative 50 degree winds, the serum was delivered to Nome. As a result, only one other life was lost to the potential epidemic. Their sacrifice gave an entire town the gift of life.

If you and I had a cure for some kind of illness, would we share it readily with others? We have the cure for sin, and we should be eager to tell others. When we have been reconciled to God by the sacrifice of Jesus, we will want to see others experience connection and friendship with God.

Who is one person you could share the grace of God with this week? What is one way you could share your faith through words or deeds to let others know about God's love? Make an intentional point of being an ambassador for the Kingdom, and remember to invite them to church next week for Back to Church Sunday.

### **Pray**



## **Discussion Questions:**

*Provide these questions to your Sunday School classes or small groups, or send them home with families to discuss during the week. They are also a great way to engage with your online audience before, during or after each service*

1. How do you become a disciple of Jesus? What are the indicators that you are one?
2. What did St. Francis of Assisi mean when he said, “Preach the gospel at all times and if necessary, use words?” Do you agree?
3. Who do you know that is a good ambassador for the Kingdom of God? Why?
4. Why is it urgent to share the Good News of Jesus with others?
5. What is your 60 second version of the Gospel that you could share in a quick conversation with someone?

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