

FROM FRUIT TO ROOT

“What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart.”

MATTHEW 15:18



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A SCRIPTURE-GUIDED WORKBOOK

FROM FRUIT TO ROOT



REPENTANCE • RENEWED FAITH • NEW FRUIT

Based on Matthew 15:18-20

BEGIN HERE

How to walk together

A guided conversation, not an interrogation

PURPOSE Notice the fruit of our lives, trace it toward heart-level beliefs, turn from sin and false worship to God, renew faith in Jesus, and bear fruit consistent with repentance.

The four questions

- 1 What am I doing or experiencing?
- 2 What am I believing about myself?
- 3 What am I believing about what God has done?
- 4 What am I believing about who God is?

A covenant for the conversation

- ☐ Pray for the Spirit's help and let the person sharing answer in their own words.
- ☐ Ask gentle questions; do not announce another person's motives.
- ☐ Use Scripture to reveal God and lead toward Jesus, not to silence pain.
- ☐ Distinguish sin from suffering, temptation, grief, trauma, and health symptoms.
- ☐ Keep confidences except when safety or protection requires outside help.

1 Corinthians 4:5 *"The Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart."*

Consider: We depend on the Lord; we do not presume to read another person infallibly.

A SIMPLE SUMMARY

The Fruit-to-Root movement

Return to this path whenever the Spirit brings fruit into the light.

- 1 **Inspect the fruit**
Name what you are doing or experiencing. Distinguish suffering from sin and notice what you are wanting, fearing, or trying to control.
- 2 **Trace toward the roots**
Ask what you are believing about yourself, about what God has done through Jesus, and about who God is.
- 3 **Confess and turn**
Bring sinful conduct, unbelief, and false worship into the light. Turn from sin to the living God.
- 4 **Renew faith in Christ**
Look to Jesus' faithful life, atoning death, resurrection, reign, promised return, and gift of the Spirit.
- 5 **Bear fitting fruit**
Practice concrete obedience, repair harm, establish safeguards, and evaluate Spirit-produced fruit over time.

REMEMBER We do not manufacture fruit to earn God's love. We turn to the God who loved us in Christ while we were sinners, and his Spirit teaches us to walk in newness of life.

Notes

Record what you want to remember and revisit.

SCRIPTURES TO MEDITATE ON

PRAYER REQUESTS

FOLLOW-UP NOTES

What am I doing or experiencing?

Name what is present before trying to explain it.

Matthew 15:18 *“What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person.”*

Proverbs 4:23 *“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”*

PASTORAL CARE Painful feelings are not automatically sinful. Fear, grief, trauma responses, stress, and illness may call for compassion and appropriate professional care. Examine your response to God and neighbor without condemning suffering itself.

A. What happened? Describe the situation concretely.

B. What did I think, say, do, avoid, or repeatedly rehearse? What did I feel in my body?

C. What was I wanting, fearing, loving, trusting, protecting, or trying to control?

QUESTION 2 • FUNCTIONAL IDENTITY

What am I believing about myself?

Listen for the identity underneath the response.

Psalms 139:23-24 *"Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!"*

Galatians 2:20 *"It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me."*

Romans 8:1 *"There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*

A. Complete the sentence: In this moment, I acted as though I am...

B. What did I believe I needed, deserved, or had to secure for myself?

C. What did I believe would happen if I trusted and obeyed God?

Possible functional beliefs

- ☐ Everything depends on me; I must stay in control.
- ☐ I am alone, unprotected, or unloved.
- ☐ My worth depends on approval, success, comfort, pleasure, or being right.
- ☐ My shame or failure is greater than Christ's grace.

MY WORDS

CONTINUE WALKING IN THE LIGHT

Evaluate new fruit & follow up

Repentance is a new direction practiced in community over time.

NEW FRUIT What Spirit-produced fruit will we prayerfully evaluate over the next week or month?

Walk together

PERSON WHO WILL FOLLOW UP

DATE WE WILL RECONNECT

WHAT WE WILL PRAY FOR

SAFETY If the situation includes violence, threats, coercion, intimidation, stalking, sexual abuse, child abuse, or property destruction, prioritize immediate safety. Do not pressure an endangered person into private confrontation or unsafe contact. Involve appropriate civil authorities, safeguarding leaders, and qualified professional support.

Closing prayer

Holy Spirit, bring what is hidden into the light without crushing our hope. Show us our sin, reveal Jesus clearly, grant genuine repentance and faith, empower truthful repair and obedience, protect the vulnerable, and produce fruit that honors God and loves our neighbor. Amen.

FRUIT CONSISTENT WITH REPENTANCE

Walk forward in faith and obedience

Safeguards support repentance; they do not replace a changed heart.

Matthew 3:8 *"Bear fruit in keeping with repentance."*

Galatians 5:22-23 *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control."*

Ephesians 4:22-24 *"Put off your old self... be renewed in the spirit of your minds... put on the new self."*

PUT OFF What conduct, pattern, access, secrecy, or opportunity must end?

MAKE RIGHT Whom must I tell, ask forgiveness from, repay, correct, protect, or make restitution to? What consequences must I accept?

PUT ON What opposite act of love and obedience will I practice?

SAFEGUARDS What boundaries, accountability, pastoral care, or professional help will support faithful change?

QUESTION 3 • GOD'S WORK

What am I believing about what God has done?

Examine how you are interpreting God's actions and promises.

Romans 5:8 *"God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 *"Christ died for our sins... he was buried... he was raised on the third day."*

John 14:16-18 *"He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever... I will not leave you as orphans."*

A. In this situation, I have acted as though God has...

B. What am I assuming God has failed to do, or must do on my terms?

C. How have I minimized, forgotten, or denied what God has accomplished through Jesus?

D. Which part of the gospel most directly confronts my interpretation: Jesus' life, death, resurrection, reign, return, or gift of the Spirit?

QUESTION 4 • GOD'S CHARACTER

What am I believing about who God is?

Name the view of God implied by the roots you have uncovered.

John 14:9 "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

Hebrews 1:3 "He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature."

Psalms 46:1 "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

A. Complete honestly: I have been living as though God is...

B. What false god or substitute refuge have I trusted: control, approval, comfort, pleasure, power, safety, success, or self-righteousness?

C. How does Jesus' life, death, resurrection, reign, and presence by the Spirit reveal that this belief is false?

TRINITARIAN CONFESSION Jesus Christ is truly God the Son and the perfect revelation of the Father. Through the Son and by the Spirit, we know and worship the one true God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

TURN TO GOD THROUGH CHRIST

Confession, repentance & renewed faith

Bring both the sinful fruit and its false root into the light.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."

Acts 26:20 "They should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance."

Mark 1:15 "Repent and believe in the gospel."

CONFESS THE FRUIT God, I confess that I... Name the thought, word, action, omission, harm, and person affected.

CONFESS THE ROOT I wanted or feared... I treated _____ as my refuge or savior. Lies I believed about myself... about what you have done... and about who you are...

TURN FROM SIN I renounce and turn from... Include false worship, unbelief, and the specific sinful conduct that followed.

RENEW FAITH IN JESUS Because of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, reign, and Spirit, I believe that you are... and that in Christ I am...