

Growing Deeper
In This House

Week One: *We All Belong*
Romans 1:1-7

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. How can you tell when you really belong to a group? What types of behaviors give you the best indicators?
2. For some of us, actions speak louder than words. For others, there's nothing more powerful than hearing it straight from someone's mouth. Which is more powerful for you? Explain the reasoning behind your choice.
3. Read Romans 1:1-7. At the risk of burying the lede, whom does verse 6 clearly include as belonging?
4. What does it mean to you personally to know that you belong to Christ? Is this something that you have known a long time, or are you still in the process of believing this?
5. If you are still wrestling with this read John 3:16-17. Then close your FIFTEEN in prayer. Gove thanks that God loves you so much, he sent his son into the world, not to condemn you, but to save you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

6. Look again at Romans 1:1-7. Note the word Paul uses to describe himself in verse 1. What does that word connote for you?
7. How do you do your best work? When you do it willingly or when you are compelled? Describe an example of each kind of task that you perform regularly.
8. The Greek word in verse 1 that is translated as servant in most modern traditions could have been used to denote a servant, who willingly serves his master or slave who is compelled to serve. Judging by the passion in Paul's work, do you think he's more of a servant of Christ or a slave? Why would that matter?
9. Paul almost seemed to boast in his status as a servant of Christ. What makes a person proud to serve another? Have you ever felt that way toward another person?
10. One answer you may have given for question 10 is a deep sense of belonging. How does a deep sense of belonging motivate us to serve?
11. Finish your FIFTEEN by asking God to give you a spirit to serve others.

Spend FIFTEEN - Three

12. Have you ever known a group or a family that was especially tight-knit? How did you feel about them? Were you envious?

13. Do you tend to seek out this type of group or avoid them? Explain your answer.

14. Look again at Romans 1:1-7. What did Paul say he was called to do?

15. The Jesus' twelve closest disciples Apostles were specifically known as the Apostles, a tight-knit group by all accounts. But the same word can also mean messenger. What is the importance of messengers?

16. What does it say about a group, even a tight-knit group, that employs messengers?

17. Paul states pretty emphatically in this verse that he has been called by Christ to declare to all that they are included. How does knowing that his authority comes from Jesus himself, affect your ability to take him at his word?

18. As you end your FIFTEEN in prayer. Ask God to help you be open taking him at his word that he has a place for you in his group, you and everyone you know.

Spend FIFTEEN-Day Four

19. We talked about it briefly earlier in the week. How do you know when you belong? Specifically, how do you know deep down on an emotional level?

20. Is the feeling of belonging something that comes easily to you, or is it hard for you accept? Is this feeling something you are comfortable with?

21. Read Galatians 3:26-29. What do these verses say unite us? How does it feel to read these words?

22. What do we receive as part of the belonging in verse 29?

23. Belonging to Christ through the gift of Baptism is the ultimate acceptance. You belong to Jesus. How does this change how you feel about other types of groups?

24. Finish your FIFTEEN with a prayer of gratitude. Thank God for loving you and claiming you as his own through

Jesus.

Spend FIFTEEN: Day Five

25. This may be tough to think about, but think about a time when you were excluded. How did it feel? How did it change the way you felt about including or excluding others?

26. Look again at Galatians 3:26-29. What does the author say there is no more of because of our belonging in Christ?

27. If Jesus does not see us through the lens of labels, how should this impact the way we divide and label others?

28. Again, this may be difficult to think about, but think about a time that you have excluded someone unfairly. How does it feel to think back on that time now? How do you wish you would have handled things differently?

29. If Baptism is the bedrock of our belonging in Christ, why is it unjust for us to treat fellow Christians as less than ourselves?

30. On day one this week, we looked at a very well-know verse of the bible. Look again at John 3:16-17. If God wants everyone to be a part of his family, it fair for us to treat those who don't yet find their identity in Christ as less than ourselves? Why or why not?

31. As you finish your final FIFTEEN this week, consider all that it means to be a part of God's family through the gift of Baptism. If you have been Baptized, end by giving thanks for being included in God's family. If you have not yet been Baptized, ask God to give you the courage to take a step toward that goal. Then go to Pathfinderstl.org/baptism to find information on how to be Baptized at Pathfinder Church.