



the message connect

The Message Connect is a devotion that goes deeper into Sunday morning's message, intentionally connecting it to our lives throughout the week. Through a 15-20 minute video and discussion guide, we challenge everyone to go deeper in their faith because we believe growing people change for God's glory and their God-honoring life purpose.

WEEK TWO: SPIRIT OR FLESH

Go online to ringgoldchurch.com/themessageconnect to watch this week's Message Connect video.

Key Scriptures:

Romans 8:5-17

We can either be dominated by our sin nature or controlled by the Spirit. When we accept the freedom that Jesus offers, the Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in us, and we have no obligation to do what our sinful nature urges us to do! This should make us indebted to him— not in debt to him. Therefore, we should want to “lean in,” allowing the Holy Spirit to work in and through us so that we can make an eternal difference in the lives of others!

Next Steps:

1. Start Talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

If you were released from a three-year captivity as a hostage, what would you do during your first week of freedom?

2. Start Thinking. Ask a thoughtful question.

What did you learn about God from the message this week?

3. Start Sharing. Here are questions to help you dig deeper into God's Word.

Romans 8:5-11. The worst version of you is the one dominated by sin and the best version of you is controlled by the Spirit.

When do you notice the two versions of you?

In what ways do you feel obligated or controlled by your sin?

Can you see that being controlled or led by the Holy Spirit is the opposite of being controlled by sin? In what ways do you see the freedom in this?

Romans 8:12. There are two primary pitfalls we fall into: When we try to add anything to Jesus (Moralism: Belief + Right Behavior = Acceptance from God) or when we subtract anything from obedience (Relativism: Belief + Good Intentions = Fulfillment).

Do you ever try to please God through what you perceive as being "good deeds," thinking he will accept you more? If so, in what way?

Do you ever ignore, neglect or rebel against the Spirit of God's intervention in your life? If so, in what way?

Romans 8:13. You don't have to earn anything for your salvation (Jesus has already paid your debt!), but that doesn't mean you don't have to exert some effort in order to grow.

We don't have to earn our salvation—it is a free gift Jesus offers us!—but spiritual and emotional growth, working on weaknesses, marriage, parenting, finances, dealing with sin all takes hard work!

Are you able to discern the difference between hard work to pay back a debt and hard work because you're indebted? How? Do you usually live your life like you are in debt or indebted?

God wants to work in and through you, but it requires you to lean in to the Holy Spirit's work in your life. What are some areas of your life where you need to lean in?

The purpose of your life is to make an eternal difference in the lives of others. What would it look like for you to fully lean in to what God wants to do in you to help you fully realize your purpose?

4. Start Praying. Be bold, and pray with power.

Take some time to pray over identified action steps and life issues. Pray that God would continue to actively grow and mature you in Christ.

5. Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week

What is God saying to you through his word? What are you going to do about it, and when?

For more information about taking the next steps in your faith, visit: ringgoldchurch.com/nextsteps.

LET OUR PASTORS LEAD YOUR DISCUSSION.

Our Pastors have created The Message Connect video for the *Good News Is Coming* message series. Go deeper and wider in your faith walk with us by going to ringgoldchurch.com/messageconnect.