



foundations

pursuing Christ through discipleship

who is Jesus?

03

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foundations

pursuing Christ through discipleship

*for no one can lay a foundation
other than that which is laid,
which is Jesus Christ.*

1 corinthians 3:11



loving him
& loving his.

why discipleship?

the story of God is the story of a king saving his people and building his eternal kingdom—a kingdom that is made up of people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. his is an ever-expanding kingdom, and it includes us as **disciples of Jesus**.

before Jesus returned to heaven after his resurrection, he commanded his disciples to go and make disciples who would then make disciples (matthew 28:19-20). you are reading these words as a result of their obedience and the obedience of generations of men and women after them.

Jesus' command to make disciples applies just as much to us today as it did to his original followers. **he desires disciples, not merely converts**. he wants us to be followers and worshippers of him, not simply spectators and fans.

this is the essence of discipleship: **follow me as together we follow Christ.**

as you use this resource, do not let this be merely a cognitive exercise. discipleship is not simply knowing more about God, but rather it is **knowing God intimately** and **daily surrendering your life to his lordship**.

read slowly. ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you more and more of who God is and his steadfast love for you specifically. pray that your heart and mind would be moved to worship as you meet with God in his word.

in order to love God we must know him. as our knowledge of him grows, we are to make him known. as members of the body of Christ, we get to spur one another on towards Christ-likeness through discipleship.

this is the essence of discipleship: follow me as together we follow Christ. the commandment hasn't changed—we are to be disciplined to make disciples who make disciples. his kingdom is made up of people who know him, love him, and follow him. **if you belong to him, you are a part of this kingdom**.

so then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,
built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.

ephesians 2:19-20

don't skip this!

foundations was created to be a resource for you to use as you walk through your discipling relationships. it in no way replaces scripture as the authority on any topic or truth, but rather it is to be supplemental in your growing understanding of God and his word. the purpose of this tool is to assist in laying a solid biblical foundation as well as equip believers to study the bible and disciple others to do the same.

a few notes as you begin:

- **pray!**

it is the Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth (john 16:13), so anytime we seek to read or study scripture, we need to first **pray that the Holy Spirit would illuminate our minds** to understand the truths we will read and **soften our hearts** to let scripture transform us.

- **slow down!**

resist the temptation to treat any of this as an item on a checklist or see this as homework. do not feel the pressure to finish any portion in a single sitting or even to look up every scripture reference listed.

the end goal of this resource is not that you would finish any of it in a specific timeframe, but that you would **grow to know God and worship him more**.

- **be free!**

each section of *foundations* includes an introduction and four parts to provide a structure for getting together regularly to study and discuss the word. consider focusing on just one of these parts each week. this pace will allow you to enjoy several days reading and meditating on the scriptures as you reflect on what the Holy Spirit reveals to you before you meet to talk about it.

however, you are welcome to **move through it at whatever pace works for your discipling relationship**. everything is provided for your benefit—feel free to use it in the way that works best for you as the Spirit leads.

**teach me your way, o Lord,
that I may walk in your truth;
unite my heart to fear your name.**

psalm 86:11



**who is
Jesus?**

who is Jesus?

for to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting father, prince of peace.

isaiah 9:6

» *before beginning this section, in your own words, who is Jesus?*

Jesus is the true and only son of God. **the entire bible points to him** as he is the fulfillment of all the promises of God. he, though fully God, took on human flesh, lived a perfect, obedient life, died a sinless death, and forever conquered the grave by rising from the dead. **he *is* the gospel.**

throughout the pages of scripture, Jesus is called by many different names and descriptions. **these names give us a greater view of his grandeur.** while the list below is in no way meant to be exhaustive, let it lead you to worship as you consider his splendor and majesty.

- ***immanuel***—isaiah 7:14
- ***man of sorrows***—isaiah 53:3
- ***son of man***—matthew 20:28
- ***savior***—luke 2:11
- ***friend of sinners***—luke 7:34
- ***word of God***—john 1:1
- ***creator***—john 1:2-4
- ***lamb of God***—john 1:29
- ***son of God***—john 1:34
- ***bread of life***—john 6:33-35
- ***light of the world***—john 8:12, 9:5
- ***good shepherd***—john 10:11-15
- ***the way, the truth, and the life***—john 14:6
- ***lord***—romans 10:9
- ***redeemer***—galatians 4:4-5
- ***high priest***—hebrews 4:14-16
- ***founder and perfecter of our faith***—hebrews 12:2
- ***lion of judah***—revelation 5:5
- ***king***—revelation 17:14
- ***alpha and omega***—revelation 22:13

Jesus, the eternally existent son of God has been the word of God since creation. he is the lion of judah and the sacrificial lamb of God who is the way, the truth, and the life. in the incarnation, he came as the son of man—immanuel, God with us—in order to become our savior and our great high priest who intercedes for us before the father. and for those of us who have trusted in him, he is now and forever, our Lord and king.

son of God

the Godhead has eternally existed as one God in three persons: God the father, God the son, and God the Holy Spirit. this three-in-one doctrine of God is known as the *trinity*, and the son of God is the second member of the trinity. he is eternal and co-equal with both God the father and God the Holy Spirit—all three sharing the same essence as one Godhead.

although he is the son, he is in no way less than God the father, nor was he created by the father. because of our understanding of the human father-son relationship, it can be difficult to comprehend how a son could be both equal to and not created by a father, but the bible tells us that **the son is God just as much as the father is God.**

- **john 10:30-38**
- **john 14:8-11**
- **2 corinthians 4:3-6**
- **colossians 1:15-17**

» *what questions do you have about Jesus as son of God or about his relationship to God the father?*

Jesus, before he ever came to earth as a baby in a manger, has always been the eternally existent son of God. there was never a time when God the father existed without the son. **Jesus is now and has always been fully God.**

while our finite minds can never grasp a timeless eternity past, there was a point in history when time began, and the son of God was there—present and active in the works of creation.

- **genesis 1:26**
- **proverbs 30:4**
- **john 1:1-3**
- **john 17:5**
- **hebrews 11:3**
- **revelation 21:6**

» *have you ever considered the son of God to be actively involved in creation? does this change how you read the creation account? why or why not?*

» *in what ways is the eternity of Jesus significant?*

during his earthly ministry, **Jesus publicly proclaimed that he is the one and only God.** this infuriated the religious leaders of the day who accused him of blasphemy. their anger and indignation drove them to sentence him to death. the son of God was crucified because they would rather silence him than surrender to him as God. this was the plan of God from before time began—our redemption through his crucified son.

whoever confesses that Jesus is the son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

1 john 4:15

- **mark 14:55-64**
- **john 8:34-59**
- **acts 2:23-24**
- **revelation 22:13**

» *the crucifixion of Jesus was always the eternal plan of the triune God. what are the implications of this truth?*

son of man

from eternity past, the son of God dwelled in glory and perfect fellowship with God the father and God the Holy Spirit. in the incarnation, God put on human flesh—**the son of God became, for us, the son of man in the person of Jesus.**

- john 1:14
- romans 8:3
- galatians 4:4
- hebrews 2:14-18

» *what are the implications of God the son becoming the son of man?*

Jesus left glory and came to earth, but in doing so he never lost a single element of his divinity as he lived as a man among men. he was always, at every moment on earth, **both fully God and fully man.** because he was fully man, he experienced the joys and trials of the human life like we do—except because he is fully God, he did it perfectly and completely without sin.

- isaiah 53:2-5
- matthew 4:1-11
- mark 10:45
- mark 15:16-20
- john 11:32-42
- hebrews 4:15

» *how do these verses show Jesus' true humanity as the son of man?*

» *Jesus Christ, the son of man, encountered temptation and felt pain in ways similar to what you have endured. how does this impact how you come to him with your sin and suffering?*

just as the son retained his divinity in the incarnation, in the resurrection he rose to life in bodily form and **is both God and man forever.** his ministry and claims of divinity were proven true by his physical resurrection.

in his resurrection, he also proves that **our promised resurrection is both physical and true,** not merely spiritual or theoretical. he has gone before us in his physical, glorified body; one day, we too, will be with him in our glorified, incorruptible, imperishable but very physical bodies.

- luke 24:36-39
- acts 26:22-23
- romans 8:23
- 1 corinthians 15:20-24, 53
- philippians 3:20-21
- colossians 1:18-20

» *have you ever considered that Jesus will forever be both God and man? how does this affect your view of your relationship with him?*

have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

philippians 2:5-8

savior

since the fall of humanity, we have been under the curse of sin and death. in disobeying God, adam and eve sinned, causing insurmountable separation between humankind and the God of the universe. because of the holiness of God, under the curse of sin, **our debt to him requires either perfect obedience or our very lives.**

but no man is able to do all that is required to perfectly fulfill the law and live a sinless life. no human could die on our behalf to save us from the wrath of God. only God himself could accomplish this task.

in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight.

ephesians 1:7-8

God the son became the son of man in order to become our savior.

- **genesis 2:15-17**
- **romans 6:23**
- **colossians 2:13-14**

Jesus' perfect life was absolutely necessary to accomplish our salvation. under the sacrificial system in the old testament, there was a repeated requirement for the sacrifice: it had to be an animal without blemish. for that reason, Jesus Christ, as the sacrificial lamb of God, had to be perfect in every way so that, covered by his blood and righteousness, we could also be seen by God as perfect.

- **ephesians 5:25-27**
- **colossians 1:21-22**
- **1 peter 1:18-19**

in the crucifixion, all the sin and unrighteousness that was ours was placed upon Christ on the cross. when he died, our guilt, the curse of sin, died too. in one moment in time, **he endured what was our eternal plight: the wrath of God on account of sin.** the pain of the burden he gladly took on was fully felt by him—every excruciating second. this is what he came to accomplish for our salvation.

- **psalm 22:16-18**
- **isaiah 53:10-11**
- **luke 22:39-45**
- **1 peter 2:24**
- **hebrews 9:23-28**
- **hebrews 12:1-2**

» *the pain that Christ endured is unimaginable, and yet he did it willingly.
what is the posture of your heart towards him as you consider the crucifixion?*

he became our savior because there was no way for us to save ourselves.

in john 19:30, Jesus says, "it is finished" as he breathed his last on the cross. in uttering these words, Jesus declared that the debt we owe has been paid in full; there is nothing else to be done or added to his work for us to be saved. **we can rest in his finished work** and the grace that he lavishes upon us.

» *in what ways are you tempted to "work" to make yourself right with God?
is it easy for you to rest in his grace? why or why not?*

"Christ is much more powerful to save, than adam was to destroy." —john calvin

lord and king

we are eager and delighted to have Jesus as our savior, but he is so much more. **he is both our savior *and* our Lord and king.**

when we confess that Jesus is our Lord, we are willingly yielding our lives to his authority and control—**we surrender our lives to him.** this truth gives many of us pause because we often desire to be lord and king of our own lives.

surrender may sound undesirable, but in truth, **it is freeing.** we no longer have to live according to the demanding desires of our sinful nature; instead, we get to live in glad, daily submission to our kind and loving Lord.

- luke 9:23-24
- romans 10:9-10
- philippians 2:9-11
- colossians 1:13-14

» *have you surrendered yourself to Jesus, making him Lord of your life? if so, take some time to reflect on that journey and praise him for his work in your life. if not, what is keeping you from making him your Lord?*

salvation is so much more than just escaping eternal damnation: we have been saved by a king into the kingdom of God. we are not saved to serve ourselves or build our own little kingdoms, but we are to be about building his true and lasting kingdom. we cannot live in two kingdoms or serve two kings.

he alone is king and deserves our full allegiance and unbridled worship.

- isaiah 9:6-7
- daniel 7:13-14
- micah 5:2-5
- john 18:36-37

» *what do you learn about Jesus and his kingdom from these verses?*

» *spend some time gazing at Jesus your king. how does this view of him deepen your worship?*

in the crucifixion, Christ became our savior by putting to death our sin and guilt once and for all. in the resurrection, he walked out of the grave, proving once and for all **he has power over even death itself.** once dead but now alive, Christ sits at the right hand of God the father as the ruling and reigning king of kings and Lord of lords.

- psalm 45:6
- romans 6:9-10
- romans 14:9
- revelation 1:17-18

» *when you consider the facets of Jesus in these four sections, which aspect of him most resonates with you?*

» *which part does he need to help you understand and love more deeply?*

*the lamb will conquer them,
for he is Lord of lords and king of kings,
and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.*

revelation 17:14



loving him
& loving his.