



# **foundations**

*pursuing Christ through discipleship*



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

**1 corinthians 3:11**

**foundations: pursuing Christ through discipleship**

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## 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**.

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*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.

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

psalm 86:11



**what  
is  
salvation?**



# saved from what?

and the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "you may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." —**genesis 2:16-17**

as a result of adam’s disobedience, death was now inevitable. because of his sin and our own, we were separated from God forever with no hope to redeem ourselves. humanity needed a savior.

***Jesus is savior of all who call on his name...**but what exactly have we been saved from?*

## wrath

God is fully and equally both love and justice. he would be completely just to pour out his wrath on all sinners, casting everyone to the fires of hell as just punishment for sin. in his holiness, he could not simply overlook sin—it had to be dealt with. in love he sent Jesus to atone for sin and absorb God’s wrath on our behalf so that we can live free from the fear of God’s wrath and instead be reconciled to him once again.

- **psalm 78:32-55**
- **john 3:36**
- **zephaniah 1:14-18**
- **1 thessalonians 5:9-11**

» *what response does God’s wrath evoke in you?*

## death

we will all taste death in this life if Jesus does not return first; however, in him we are promised eternal life after death. **life apart from Christ is an eternal death sentence**, but because of Christ, we who belong to him have no reason to even fear death. we can hold fast to the confidence that death is the doorway to new life forever with him.

- **acts 2:23-24**
- **1 thessalonians 4:13-18**
- **1 corinthians 15:54-58**
- **hebrews 2:14-15**

» *how do these verses give you hope in the face of death?*

## sin

in our sinful nature we are in constant rebellion against God. without the Holy Spirit, sin is our master and we gladly serve it; but Jesus has saved us from our slavery to sin. we are now aware of and able to resist sin through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

- **isaiah 59:1-4**
- **galatians 5:1**
- **romans 7:5-6**
- **1 john 2:1**

» *where have you experienced freedom from sin, and where do you still need freedom?*

## satan

we have an enemy that wants us dead. he hates God and he hates us, God’s image bearers and the objects of his love. satan is called the accuser; he testifies of our guilt before God. although the devil can disguise himself as an angel of light (2 corinthians 11:14), he is a thief who “comes only to steal and kill and destroy” (john 10:10).

- **zechariah 3:1-5**
- **1 peter 5:8-9**
- **ephesians 6:10-18**
- **revelation 12:7-12**

» *how do these verses increase your confidence in the Lord against the enemy?*

## separation

when sin entered the world in genesis 3, it brought with it painful separation from God. because of sin, humankind now lives in indignant rebellion against the creator. we could never again stand in the presence of the holy God based on our own morality or accomplishments. indeed, we could never even desire to be in his presence apart from the inner workings of the Holy Spirit.

- **exodus 33:18-20**
- **ephesians 4:17-24**
- **ephesians 2:12-19**
- **colossians 1:21-22**

- » *in what ways have you felt the tension of separation from God in this world?*
- » *what is the response of your heart as you think about having access to God’s presence for all eternity?*

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# justification

God’s law requires our perfect obedience for entrance into his eternal presence. he is perfectly holy—morally pure—and has commanded that we be holy as well. yet our sin wrecked any possibility of obtaining this righteousness on our own—we had no means by which to justify ourselves before God.

- leviticus 19:2
- deuteronomy 28:15
- matthew 5:48
- romans 3:23
- 1 peter 1:14-16
- james 2:10

» *what thoughts come to mind when you consider God’s command to be holy?*

**justification is a one time act of God** in the life of each new believer by which he has declared us righteous in his sight because of Jesus. it is a legal term which communicates that the demands of the law have been fully satisfied for those who are in Christ. at the moment of salvation, we are **eternally sealed by the Holy Spirit and forgiven of all our sins: past, present, and future.** our justification has nothing to do with what we have done or will do; it is all the work of God from beginning to end.

» *in what ways are you still trying to work to make yourself right before God?*

in faith we come to the end of ourselves and confess that we can never make ourselves holy. when we wholly trust in Christ’s redemptive work to make us right before God, we are justified and **Christ’s righteousness becomes our own.** robed in the holiness of Christ, we no longer stand condemned before God - both now and in eternity.

- isaiah 53:11
- romans 5:1-11
- 2 corinthians 5:21
- galatians 2:16
- galatians 3:10-11
- titus 3:4-7

» *when you sin, do you try to hide from God as adam and eve did in the garden, or do you run to him for forgiveness knowing you stand before him justified?*

» *how challenging is it for you to rest in Christ’s finished work as your means of justification? why?*

not only does justification make us right with God, it will also change how we relate to one another. God has declared that none of us are able to obtain righteousness on our own. **we all equally need to be clothed in Christ’s righteousness.** the field has been leveled and not one of us can boast in ourselves as we claim Christ’s holiness as our own. this should free us to love and live in peace with those around us—particularly our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ.

- isaiah 64:6
- jeremiah 9:23-24
- 1 corinthians 1:18-31
- ephesians 2:8-9

» *in what ways do you struggle with comparing yourself to other believers?*

» *how does our equal standing before God in Christ alone change the way you view and relate to your brothers and sisters in Christ, whether you know them personally or just from their notoriety?*

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# glorification

he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

revelation 21:4

from the moment we are born, we are on a journey towards death. it may be 80 years or more down the road, but, unless Jesus returns first, we will all experience death. regardless of how much we exercise or how well we eat, our bodies will eventually fail us because these bodies are not eternal. we grieve sin, sickness, and loss, and **in the depths of our souls we groan that these things should not be.**

» *name some of the hardships you have seen in your own life. do these things increase your longing for eternity?*

a day is coming when those of us who belong to him will be free of our frail minds and broken bodies, and **we will be resurrected with glorified, imperishable bodies** never again to be constrained by limitations and fears. therefore, we can remain steadfast through hardship because we are sure redemption and glorification of our bodies is coming, and all our earthly sorrows will no longer be remembered (isaiah 65:17).

- **john 17:22-24**
- **1 corinthians 15:42-53**
- **2 corinthians 4:16-18**
- **2 corinthians 5:1-9**
- **philippians 3:20-21**
- **hebrews 2:5-10**

- » *how do these truths give you a greater eternal perspective?*
- » *how could this perspective change how you look at your current circumstances? how might this change how you live?*

God's presence and holiness are so incomprehensibly all-consuming that, on our own, in our sin, we cannot look upon his face and live. many in the old testament spoke of the fear they had at the thought of being in proximity to the holy God. however, **Jesus changed everything**. we now stand clothed in his righteousness and arrayed in his glory and, because we are in him, **we are justified in this life and glorified in the next**. we will all be transformed in the presence of God. in the life to come, not only will we receive glorified bodies, but **we will enjoy God—face-to-face**.

- **deuteronomy 5:22-27**
- **judges 13:15-22**
- **isaiah 6:1-5**
- **1 corinthians 13:12**
- **hebrews 12:28-29**
- **revelation 7:9-17**

- » *as you look at eternity, what excites you more: the thought of a pain-free life or unfettered access to God himself? what might increase your affections for him in the here and now?*
- » *as you consider the beauty of your salvation—both the finished work of Christ and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in you—thank the Lord again for calling you to himself, for the work he is doing in you now, and the promised glory to come.*

he has put eternity into man's heart.

ecclesiastes 3:11

Handwriting practice lines (horizontal lines) for notes.



loving him  
& loving his.