

**who is God?**



# foundations

*knowing God through his word*

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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: knowing God through his word, 2nd edition.**

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# can we know God?

God has given his unfailing word to make himself known to his children. yet, far too often, we depend on other voices to tell us about God instead of knowing him for ourselves through his word.

God is continually pursuing our hearts; our affections for and knowledge of God grow as we spend time with him. **this needs to be our daily pursuit.**

every child of God is able to intimately know God through the scriptures—we are **all called to know him and make him known.** as we grow in our knowledge of him, we also get to invite others to grow in their knowledge of him through discipleship.

*foundations* was created to encourage an active learning process for discipling relationships. it in no way replaces scripture as the authority on any topic or truth; rather, it is intended to point you to scripture in your growing understanding of God and his word. the purpose of this tool is to assist in laying a solid biblical foundation, equip believers to study the bible, and disciple others to do the same.

## a few notes as you begin:

### • engage

each chapter of foundations includes an introduction and four sections. this format provides a structure for meeting together regularly to study and discuss the word. **consider focusing on just one section of a chapter each week.** this pace will allow you to enjoy several days engaging with the word and reflecting 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.

### • pray

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

### • worship

resist the temptation to treat any of this as an item on a checklist or see this as homework. 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 and enjoy God more. **as we gain a greater vision of God through his word, our worship of him will deepen.**

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

**psalm 86:11**

# 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 active followers and worshippers of him, not simply spectators and fans.

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.**

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

read slowly, and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you 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 get 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 discipled 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 that kingdom.**

» *Jesus is building his kingdom through our active participation in discipleship. as you start this journey, begin praying now about who God might be leading you to disciple as you grow in him.*

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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**

# who is God?

often when we hear the name *God*, we think exclusively of God the father—and yet our God is triune. **he has eternally existed as one Godhead 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*. all three are of one essence and are co-equal and co-eternal. **each person of the trinity is fully God.**

although there is one shared divine will within the Godhead, **they each carry out different roles in redemption.** God the father is eternally a father to God the son. as father, he initiates redemption by sending his son to accomplish the eternal plan of salvation. the Spirit is then sent from both the father and the son to apply the work of salvation to our lives and unite us to Christ for all eternity.

so when we speak of the attributes and character of God, **what is true of God the father is also always true of God the son and God the Holy Spirit.**

» *why is it necessary to believe that God is both one and three?*

we live in a post-christian nation where many claim to be “spiritual” and would assent to the existence of a higher power yet do not know the one true God. there are many different ideas about God and theories about the nature of who God is. this is why **we so desperately need to know the triune God of the bible**, because the god of our culture and of our liking is not the true God of creation.

at the beginning of time, God made humankind in his own image; however, far too often we tend to make him in our own image by viewing him according to our human nature and desires. **the God of the bible is not like us; he is transcendent—**beyond the limits of all possible knowledge and experience. although he is not necessarily always who we think we want him to be, he is absolutely always everything we need him to be.

- » *what are some culturally popular views of God?*
- » *how would you define or describe God? what informs your view of him?*
- » *what questions do you have about God?*

the attributes of God are vast and essential to our understanding of who God is. some of these attributes apply to God alone (incommunicable). some can also be true of us—although never perfectly—because we are made in his image (communicable).

here are few examples of God's attributes:

## incommunicable

- omnipresence
- omniscience
- omnipotence
- immutability
- self-existence
- eternity
- sovereignty

## communicable

- goodness
- justice
- love
- mercy
- truthfulness
- wisdom
- holiness

» *which of these truths about God most leads you to worship him?*

» *what other attributes of God would you add to these lists?*

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**“a God who is all love, all grace, all mercy, no sovereignty, no justice, no holiness, and no wrath is an idol.”**

r.c. sproul







