

# *Foundations of Faith*

## Lesson One: Assurance of Salvation

### Steps to Peace with God

#### **1. God's Purpose: Peace and Life**

*Read the following verses and describe in your own words God's original intention for us.*

Genesis 1:27-28 to bless us and give us a purpose; to be like him and multiply all over the earth (glorify Him)

John 3:16 (memorize) not to perish but to have eternal life

John 10:10 (memorize) To have a full and abundant life

There is a God. He is real. He exists. God is not nature or the creation of man. God is our creator. That means you are not here by accident. God made you to bless you and give you a purpose. He wants you to experience peace and life – both eternal and abundant.

#### **2. The Problem: Separation from God**

*Read the following verses and describe in your own words sin and its results*

Romans 3: 23 (memorize) Everyone has sinned; Everyone fails to meet God's standard and purpose for their lives

Romans 6:23 (memorize) We all deserve death

Isaiah 59:2 Sin has separated us from God

*Have you ever sinned? Yes No I don't know (see Exodus 20:1-17)*

#### *Story on sin and our need for God*

*Which statement best describes what you believe? What is wrong with the others?*

- I have made a few mistakes, but mostly I am still a good person.
- A loving God wouldn't send anyone to hell – just really evil people.
- I have sinned against God, so I deserve death and eternal separation from God.

*(See 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9)*

*What are some ways people try to get to God? Why do they fail? Good works; Morality religion; philosophy; We can't get to God on our own; we can't be good enough*

*The Bridge Illustration*

#### **3. God's Bridge: the Cross!**

*Read the following verses and describe in your own words what God has done for us.*

John 14:6 (memorize) Jesus is the only way to God in heaven

Romans 5:8 (memorize) Jesus died on the cross for our sins

1 Peter 3:18 Jesus died for sins to bring us to God

Ephesians 2:8-9 God saves us from our sin by grace through faith; good works don't get us to heaven

## Story on grace

### 4. Our Response: Receive Jesus

Read the following verse and describe in your own words what we must do to receive God's offer of salvation.

Romans 10:9 (memorize) Confess Jesus as Lord of your life; and believe in his death and resurrection

Check the responses necessary for you to be saved. (see also 1 John 1:9; Acts 2:37-39; 1 Corinthians 15:1-5; John 1:12)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Do more good things than bad things   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Be willing to turn from your sins                              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admit that you have sinned | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Believe Jesus died to forgive your sins and rose from the dead |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sincerely try to be a better person   | <input type="checkbox"/> Choose one of the many ways to get to heaven                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to church more                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Invite Jesus to come in and control your life                  |

### New life in Christ!

What can we learn from these verses about what a true Christian is?

2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 17 a new creation; one who no longer lives for themselves, but for God; convinced Jesus die for all

1 John 5:12-13 Someone who accepts Jesus and believes in him

Check the statements that describe your new life in God.

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> inner peace                   | <input type="checkbox"/> joy having been forgiven            | <input type="checkbox"/> ability to defeat sin in my life  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sense of God's presence       | <input type="checkbox"/> desire to do God's will             | <input type="checkbox"/> desire to share Jesus with others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> awareness of sin in my life   | <input type="checkbox"/> confidence that I will go to heaven | <input type="checkbox"/> new love and concern for others   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> feeling of unconditional love | <input type="checkbox"/> desire to read the Bible            |  |

Have you believed in Jesus and received this new life? Yes No I don't know

Describe your life in the following boxes:

My life before Jesus

When I encountered Jesus

Since I encountered Jesus

#### YOUR RESPONSE THIS WEEK:

- Pray to receive Jesus into your life.
- Record your spiritual "birthday" here:

On \_\_\_\_\_ (month) \_\_\_\_ (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (year) I received Jesus into my heart to be my savior. He forgave my sin, became my Lord and took control of my life. Now I have become a child of God and a new creation. I have begun a new life.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

- Talk with your trainer or a pastor about being baptized. (Acts 2:37-39; Romans 6:1-14)
- Get your own Bible if you do not have one. Begin reading the book of Matthew. Begin to do everything that Jesus commands.
- Memorize the steps to peace with God with the scriptures (in bold) and the bridge illustration.
- Practice sharing your testimony.
- Plan to attend a lifegroup.
- Agree with the one taking you through this lesson on a realistic but challenging goal to share the gospel this week.
- Share this lesson with someone who is ready to be trained.

# *Foundations of Faith*

## **Lesson Two: Devotional Life**

**God wants to spend time with you!** One of God's deepest desires is for you to know Him and have fellowship with Him. We can pray at any time of the day and at any place. God is everywhere and wants to be involved in every part of your life. Yet to really have a relationship with a person, you need to have consistent contact with that person. In the same way, if you want to have a close relationship with God, you need to set daily time just for God. This "set apart" time for seeking God is our devotion life.

*Read Psalm 27:4, 7-8. Describe the attitude this person has toward seeking God.* Seeking is their highest priority;  
passion for God; Determination to seek God

*Read Jeremiah 29:11-13. What does God promise us in these verses?* Hope and prosperous future;  
God will listen when we pray; God can be found; That we will find him when we seek him

*Read Mark 1:35. What can we learn from Jesus?* It's good to find a place alone to pray early in the morning

### *Personal testimony on when and how you started spending time with God*

**God hears us when we pray!** Prayer is "talking" with God. We can communicate with God in the same way we can with any other person. Prayer should be natural conversation with God. When you pray you should be honest and sincere. We don't have to pray perfectly. Be encouraged - Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, and He will teach you too.

*\*Read the following verses and write in your own words the type of prayer described*

Psalm 135:3 Praise...celebrating who God is

1 John 1:9 Confession...acknowledging your sins before God and repenting

1 Timothy 2:1 Intercession...Asking God to meet the needs of others

Philippians 4:6-7 Petitions...Asking God to meet for your own need; Thanksgiving...gratitude for what God has done

### Effective prayer includes...

### Verse

Having faith	"But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt..." (James 1:6)
Confessing our sins	"If we confess our sins..
Asking according to His will	"...if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." (1 John 5:14)
Asking in Jesus' name	"And I will do whatever you ask in my name..." (John 14:13)
Praying with perseverance	"That...they should always pray and not give up." (Luke 18:1)

### *Story on the power of answered prayer*

## God wants to speak to us through His Word – the Bible.

God speaks to us in a variety of ways. Yet every potential truth about God and the world is subject to the authority of the Bible. The Bible was written over a 1500 year span by over forty authors in three languages. It records over 1000 references to fulfilled prophecies and an eyewitness account of a supernatural miracle of God in most of its 66 books. The Bible is regarded as the most reliable text of any piece literature ever. It has been translated into other languages more than any other book. And for 2000 years countless lives have been transformed by its message. The Bible is God's Word to us. He said perfectly what He wanted to say through imperfect people. He speaks to us through His Word today.

### \*Match the verse and the correct truth about the Bible.

<u>  </u> B 1. Psalm 119:89-91	a. The Scriptures should lead us to a relationship with Jesus.
<u>  </u> C 2. Psalm 119:160 (Hebrews 4:12-13)	b. God's Word is eternal and, therefore, relevant to us today.
<u>  </u> D 3. 2 Timothy 3:15-17 (see Psalm 19:1-7)	c. God's Word is true - our moral standard of right and wrong.
<u>  </u> A 4. John 5:39-40 (see Luke 24:27, 44-45)	d. All Scripture is from God, powerful and useful to transform lives.

What do you believe about the Bible? \_\_\_\_\_

Below are **three simple questions** to ask yourself when you are reading the Bible.

**Read this story from Luke 10:38-42 and answer the following questions.**

What does this passage say?

How does this apply to me?

What should I do to obey God's Word?

## How to get started with your devotional life

1. **Prepare for God** – Find a time where you can consistently meet with God. Choose a place where you can meet with God without being disturbed. Collect items you may need for your time with God: a Bible, journal, pen, music and a calendar.
2. **Worship God** – Sing songs of praise to God. Thank God for something good in your life. (Psalm 100; Romans 12:1-2)
3. **Bible reading** – Choose a book in the Bible to study using the three simple questions above. If you have never read the Bible before, begin with the gospel of Matthew. Consider how what you read applies to your life and obey everything Jesus says to do.
4. **Prayer** - Share your concerns for yourself and others with God through prayer.
5. **Wait on God** – Listen for His encouragement, correction and direction. Write down what you sense God saying to you in a journal. (Psalm 143:8)

Make it a part of your daily routine. It is your decision to meet with God. Spending time with God will not make God love you more, but if you seek God everyday, you will grow in your love for Him and obedience to Him. (Matthew 6:33)

**\*Will you commit to a daily devotional life with God?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

### YOUR RESPONSE THIS WEEK:

- Decide when and where you will set aside time alone to spend time with God every day and begin!
- Get a journal and make a list of things you want to pray about.
- Spend time with God together with the one taking you through this lesson.
- Agree with the one taking you through this lesson on a realistic but challenging goal to share the gospel this week.
- Share these lessons with someone who is ready to be trained.

# *Foundations of Faith*

## **Lesson Three: The Church**

### **Created for Community**

*Read Genesis 2:18. In God's perfect creation before any sin, what did God say was "not good"? Why? \_*

For man (people) to be alone; People need help; He created us for community

### *Story on our need for community and acceptance*

One of the greatest needs of the human heart is relationship. When you became a child of God, you became a member of God's family, the church. The church is not just a building or a meeting. The church is a gathered group of believers. We were created for this kind of community. We all need God, and we all need the church to find acceptance and fulfill His plans for our lives. Jesus and the church are inseparable.

*Read Ephesians 1:22-23. What do these verses teach us about the church? \_\_\_\_\_* Jesus is the head of the church; The church is describes as Christ's body, fellow citizens, God's household (family), a building in the process of being built, the temple of God (where his presence dwells)

**Read Hebrews 10:24-25. What do these verses tell us is God's will for us regarding being with other believers regularly?**

We need to meet regularly to spur each other on and to encourage one another

*Describe in a couple words your past view and experience of the church. \_\_\_\_\_*

### *Personal testimony on what the church has meant in your life*

### **Church life**

The best description of church life in the New Testament is more of a series of snapshots than a definition. Numerous passages help us see what Jesus intended for His body, the church.

***Read Acts 2:42-47 and circle the activities and experiences that characterized the early church.***

v. 42 - *They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

v. 43 - *And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.*

v. 44 - *And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;*

v. 45 - *and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.*

v. 46 - *And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,*

v. 47 - *praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."*

**What would attract you to this type of community? \_\_\_\_\_**

### **Purpose of the Church**

*Read Ephesians 3:10-11, 20-21. What is God's purpose for the church? To reveal His wisdom to the world;*

To glorify God

*Read Matthew 28:19-20. Describe the four things Jesus commands His followers to do in these verses in your own words.* To

“go” to another person with the gospel; take the initiative; even to the nations, Lead other people to follow Jesus  
(make disciples), Baptism them with water when they choose to believe, Teach them to know and obey all Jesus  
commanded

## **Acts of Obedience**

Jesus has instructed us to obey all that he has commanded. Baptism, the observance of the Lord’s Supper and giving are three specific commands Jesus gave us that demonstrate our relationship and commitment to other believers.

### ***Baptism***

Water baptism is a public declaration that you believe in Jesus. Baptism is not optional but the first command Jesus has given new believers (Acts 2:38). Water baptism is a symbolic act through emersion in water. It does not have the power to forgive sin. But baptism does signify to the world, “I am not ashamed to identify with Jesus Christ or His family.”

*Read Romans 6:3-4. What does water baptism symbolize according to these verses?* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Our death to sin and new life in Christ \_\_\_\_\_

### ***The Lord’s Supper***

*Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. According to these verses what has Jesus instructed his disciples to do? Why?* \_\_\_\_\_ Eating the

bread and drinking the cup to symbolize his death as a way to remember his death and proclaim him \_\_\_\_\_

We call this ordinance from Jesus the Lord’s Supper. It ought to be regularly observed wherever and whenever the people of God are gathered. When we receive the Lord’s Supper, it is a time to examine our actions and faith (1 Corinthians 11:27-29), to remember what He has done for us on the cross and renew our covenant of love together with Him.

### ***Giving***

God also asks the church to be a giving community. Monetary giving is often a test of the disciple’s faith, love and obedience. Everything we have is from God, and He is our provider. We can trust Him with our money and our lives.

*What do the following verses teach us about giving?*

Malachi 3:8-10 \_\_\_\_\_ We should not rob God by holding back tithes (10% of our income) and offerings \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 \_\_\_\_\_ God wants us to give generously, willingly and cheerfully; \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 20:35 \_\_\_\_\_ it is more blessed to give than to receive \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Personal testimony of blessing from giving***

#### **YOUR RESPONSE THIS WEEK:**

- Commit to a lifegroup and Sunday morning attendance.
- Begin this month giving 10% of your income to a local church or group of believers.
- Agree with the one taking you through this lesson on a realistic but challenging goal to share the gospel this week.
- Share these lessons with someone who is ready to be trained.

## ***Foundations of Faith***

# Lesson Four: God our Father

## Our Father

God can be described in a lot of ways. He is our creator and savior. He is holy, loving and all-powerful. In the New Testament, we come to know Him as Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit. When Jesus came he showed us what the Father is like and how to have a relationship with Him. He also taught His disciples to address God in prayer saying, "Our Father who art in heaven." When you come to faith in Jesus, you are adopted into God's family (Romans 8:15). God becomes your father.

### *Story on the need for a Father*

We all have an earthly father. Like it or not our relationship (or lack of relationship) with our earthly father has significantly shaped the way we each view God as our heavenly Father for good or for bad.

*Check the words below that best describe your earthly father.*

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distant and disinterested | <input type="checkbox"/> Slow to anger                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Wants to help me            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kind and compassionate    | <input type="checkbox"/> Impatient and harsh             | <input type="checkbox"/> Condemning and unforgiving  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passive and cold          | <input type="checkbox"/> Too busy for me                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Full of grace when I fail   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Never pleased             | <input type="checkbox"/> Faithful to protect and provide | <input type="checkbox"/> Let's me do whatever I want |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Warm and accepting        | <input type="checkbox"/> Disciplines because he loves me | <input type="checkbox"/> Unconditionally loves me    |

*In what ways do you believe God is like your earthly father?* \_\_\_\_\_

## Our Father's Goodness

*Read Matthew 7:7-11. What does this verse teach about God?* He is so good and He gives better gifts than our earthly father

*Read Daniel 3:13-28. What do these verses teach us about God's protection of us?* \_\_\_\_\_

God is trustworthy whether he protects us or not; God can protect us miraculously; God is with us in trials

*Read Matthew 6:31-34. Why are God's children not to worry?* God, the Father knows our needs and will provide

### *Story on God's provision*

## Our Father's Love

*Read Luke 15:11-24. What are the similarities between this father and God the Father?* He is generous; patient; gracious; The father eagerly longed for his son to come home; He was quick to show acceptance, mercy and forgive; He celebrates his children

*Read Hebrews 12:5-11.*

Why does God discipline us? For our good; To make us holy

What are the results of God's discipline? Holiness, righteousness and peace

*Read Romans 8:31-39. Describe the love of God in your own words.* \_\_\_\_\_ It is so great. Nothing can separate us from his love.

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*How has God revealed His love to you? Please write an example below.*

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### *Story on the love of God*

**YOUR RESPONSE THIS WEEK:**

- Share with the one taking you through this lesson any painful memories of your relationship with your earthly father.
- Pray the following prayer: *“God, I believe you are my perfect Father. I choose to believe what the Bible says about you rather than my experiences. Open the eyes of my heart to see you more clearly as you really are.”*
- Agree with the one taking you through this lesson on a realistic but challenging goal to share the gospel this week.
- Share these lessons with someone who is ready to be trained.



# ***Foundations of Faith***

## **Lesson Five: the Holy Spirit**

### **Who is the Holy Spirit?**

You are not alone. Jesus promised us before He left that He would always be with us (Matthew 28:20). So if Jesus has ascended into heaven and has not returned yet how can God always be with us? The Holy Spirit is God (2 Corinthians 3:17). Jesus is God in the form of a man. He can only be one place at a time. Right now He is in heaven. But God is always with us by His Spirit. When we feel God's presence or hear God's voice – that is the Holy Spirit!

*Have you ever experienced the presence of God? When?* \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Story on experiencing the presence of God***

### **Sealing of the Holy Spirit**

*Read Ephesians 1:13-14. What happens when you first believed the gospel?* We were sealed with the Holy Spirit

guaranteeing our inheritance

When you received Jesus into your life the Holy Spirit came to live in you. The Holy Spirit dwells in and with every believer for Jesus. The Holy Spirit is like a seal on our lives securing us for God and our inheritance in heaven. The Holy Spirit is always with us working in our lives.

### ***What does the Holy Spirit do?***

*Read these verses and describe the activity of the Holy Spirit.*

John 14:26 Be our counselor; Teach and remind us of everything Jesus said

John 16:8, 12-15 Convict us of sin, righteousness and judgment; Guide us into all truth; Glorify Jesus

Romans 5:5 Puts love in our hearts

Romans 8:26-27 Helps us in our weakness; prays for us and helps us to pray

### ***Fruit of the Spirit***

The Holy Spirit also works in our lives to make us like Jesus. Christ-like characteristics are described in the Bible as good fruit.

*Review the fruit of the Spirit in the verse below. Circle 2 or 3 you would like to see more in life this week.*

*(Galatians 5:22-23)*

*“the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...”*

*Read John 15:1-8. How can we bear fruit?* We bear fruit by “remaining” in him and his word; Remaining in him

means increasing conversation with Him and obedience to his will; Ask and it will be given to us

### ***Story on abiding in God***

# Baptism of the Holy Spirit

## *Coming upon in power*

*Read Acts 1:8. What does God say the Holy Spirit will do for us? Why? Gives us power to be his witnesses*

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We are “sealed within” by the Holy Spirit when we are saved, but the Holy Spirit also wants to “come upon” us in power. This is called the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11, Acts 19:1-7) or “being continually filled” the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). We need the baptism of the Holy Spirit so that we can do the works that Jesus did, even greater ones (Acts 1:4-8; John 14:12; Hebrews 2:4). The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a personal encounter with God that draws us close to Him and empowers us to glorify Him on earth. (*Read Luke 3:20-22; 4:1, 14, 18-19 to see the baptism of the Holy Spirit and its effects in Jesus’ life.*)

## *Gifts of the Spirit*

The Holy Spirit also gives us gifts to serve the church and extend the kingdom of God. These gifts are abilities that are supernaturally empowered by God. Every believer in Jesus has at least one primary spiritual gift to contribute to the body of Christ.

*Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. (see also Romans 12:3-8 ; Ephesians 4:11-12 ) What did you learn about spiritual gifts?*

there are many gifts; each person is given at least one by God as he determines; they are given for the common good

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## *Baptism of the Spirit*

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs in a variety of ways throughout the New Testament. There is no one method for being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Neither is there only demonstration of the Spirit. The following are common, biblical characteristics of those who experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

### Receiving the Baptism of the Spirit includes...

### Verse

A desire for righteousness	“those that hunger and thirst for righteousness...will be filled.” (Matthew 5:6)
A desire for spiritual gifts	“eagerly desire spiritual gifts” (1 Corinthians 14:1)
Confessing all known sins	“Many of those who believed...openly confessed their evil deeds.” (Acts 19:18)
Coming to Jesus and believe	“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believe in me... streams of living water [Holy Spirit] will flow from within.” (John 7:37-38)
Asking the Father in prayer	“your Father in heaven gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Luke 11:13)
Hearing and receiving the Father’s love	“You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” (Luke 3:22)
Expecting manifestations like prophecy or tongues or joy or boldness	“The Holy Spirit came on them and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.” (Acts 19:6 – See also Acts 4:31-35; 13:53)

## *Story on being baptized in the Holy Spirit*

*Should the baptism of the Holy Spirit be a one-time experience? Yes No I’m not sure*

*(See Ephesians 5:18; John 20:22; Act 2:4, 4:31.)*

*Do you want to pray to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit today? Yes No I’m not sure*

### **YOUR RESPONSE THIS WEEK:**

- Pray and ask God to baptize you with the Holy Spirit.
- Have the one taking you through this lesson lay hands on you and pray for you to receive the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8:17; 2 Tim. 1:6)
- Agree with the one taking you through this lesson on a realistic but challenging goal to share the gospel this week.
- Share these lessons with someone who is ready to be trained.

# *Foundations of Faith*

## **Lesson Six: Growing Christ-like**

*Read 1 Peter 1:14-16, 22. What are some characteristics of children of God according to these verses?*

holy, not conforming to the evil desires that you had before you met Christ; being holy and operating in

love

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### **Holiness**

As you follow Christ, the sin that previously characterized your life will fade away and your life will begin to look more like His. God accepts us by grace not by good works. Yet when true salvation occurs, a change in our lives will be obvious. God promises to purify your life and make you holy (1 Thessalonians 5:21-23). The word “holy” means to be set apart. This lifelong process of becoming Christ-like involves every part of our lives.

*What do these verses teach us overcoming sin in our lives?*

Romans 6:6-7 Grace does not give us freedom to keep on sinning; We are free from the power of sin

Colossians 3:5-10 We must be active in getting rid of sin in our life

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 God will help us resist every temptation we face

*What is one area of sin, you want greater victory over in your life?* \_\_\_\_\_

### *Story on victory over sin*

### **Obedience**

In Matthew 28:20 Jesus commands His disciples, “*teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.*” Jesus calls anyone who would follow Him to surrender their life to obey Him wholeheartedly (Mark 8:34-35).

*What do the following verses teach us about obedience?*

Luke 6:46-49 Jesus is not Lord of our life unless we obey; Hearing God without obeying God will lead to

destruction

John 14:21 we show our love for God by obeying His commands

### **Key Commands of Jesus**

“*Repent and believe the good news!*” (Mark 1:14-15)

“*...be baptized, everyone of you...*” (Acts 2:38)

“*...pray and do not give up.*” (Luke 18:1)

“*...love one another.*” (John 13:34)

“*...forgive your brother from your heart.*” (Matthew 19:35)

“*give... to the poor*” (Luke 11:41)

“*do this [Lord’s supper] in remembrance of me.*” (Luke 22:14-19)

“*make disciples of all nations...*” (Matthew 28:20)

*Are you obeying the commands of Jesus?*    Yes    No    Sometimes    I don’t know

*Read Matthew 13:44-46. What does this verse teach us about surrender?* It is worth selling everything I have to have

the Kingdom of God and Jesus

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### *Story on surrender*

# Love

“Of all the \_\_\_\_\_ **COMMANDMENTS** \_\_\_\_\_ which is the most important?’ ‘The most important one,’ Jesus answered, ‘is this: **Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. \_\_\_\_\_ LOVE \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord your God with all your \_\_\_\_\_ HEART \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your \_\_\_\_\_ SOUL \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your \_\_\_\_\_ MIND \_\_\_\_\_ and with all your \_\_\_\_\_ STRENGTH \_\_\_\_\_.** The second is this: \_\_\_\_\_ LOVE \_\_\_\_\_ your neighbor as yourself. There is no \_\_\_\_\_ **COMMANDMENT** \_\_\_\_\_ greater than these.”(Mark 12:28-31)

The most defining characteristic of any follower of Jesus is love (John 13:35). Jesus has taught us that these core values of His kingdom - loving God, loving each other and loving those that don't know Jesus - ought to govern all the life and decisions of a believer.

*What do these verses teach you about love?*

Luke 7:40-47 Love for God is humble, sacrificial and extravagant; Love for God comes from being forgiven

Luke 6:32-37 Our love should extend to our enemies not just our friends; Love includes blessing, prayer and doing good for someone

## *Story on love*

### **YOUR RESPONSE THIS WEEK:**

- Share with the one taking you through this lesson an area (i.e. eating, anger, lust, loving your spouse/roommate) in which you would like to be held accountable.
- As read the gospels, begin writing down the things Jesus commanded His disciples in a journal and seek to obey those commands.
- Discuss with the one taking you through this lesson if and when you need to go through the *Seven Steps of Freedom*.
- Agree with the one taking you through this lesson on a realistic but challenging goal to share the gospel this week.
- Share these lessons with someone who is ready to be trained.

# *Foundations of Faith*

## Lesson Seven: The Great Commission

*“Then Jesus said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age.’” (Matthew 28:18-20)*

### ***All Authority***

These verses in Matthew include some of the last instructions that Jesus gave his disciples before he ascended into heaven. We call this the Great Commission. God has commissioned us with all His authority to share His message of love to the world.

***Read the following verses. Describe in your own words what power / authority God has given us.***

Acts 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Corinthians 5:18-21 We are to be his ambassador – his representative to people who don’t know him;

John 14:11-12 \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Story on a demonstration of power in evangelism***

### ***Go make disciples!***

God’s first command to humans was “be fruitful and multiply throughout the earth” (Genesis 1:28). Today, God still calls us to reproduce life so people who love and follow him fill the earth. A disciple of Jesus is an obedient and reproducing follower of Jesus. Making a disciple means helping someone else receive Christ and obey all He has commanded. God desires that each of us be bold and take the initiative to share the gospel with those that don’t know Christ.

***Read Luke 8:4-8, 11-15.***

What does this teach us about who responds to the gospel? The ones where seed falls on good soil; ¼ of the people  
responded

What does this parable teach us sharing the gospel? We should share the gospel with everyone in order to find out  
where the “good soil” is

***Read 2 Timothy 2:2. What does this teach us about making disciples?*** we should make disciples that will also be  
trustworthy to make other disciples as well

*Personal testimony on the impact of life on life evangelism and discipleship*

**All Nations!**

Read 2 Peter 3:9. Who God does desire to save? He desires to save everyone

Who are some people you need to “go” to and share the gospel? \_\_\_\_\_

Read Romans 10:13-17. Why is it important to share the gospel with those who have never heard? How can they believe if they haven’t heard?; how can they hear unless someone is sent?

Read Matthew 24:14. What does Jesus promise in this verse? He will return after the Gospel has been preached to all nations

**The very end of the age!**

When this Great Commission has been completed then Jesus has promised to return, destroying all sin and evil forever. Then we will be with him forever in perfect paradise – Heaven!

**What do the following verses teach us about heaven?**

John 14:1-3 Jesus is preparing a place for us in heaven

Revelation 7:9-10 Heaven will be filled with people from every nation, tribe, people and language

Revelation 21:3-5 We will be with God forever;

As a Christian you now have a great and living hope that one day you will be with God forever in heaven with those you love that have believed in him as well. The most important thing now is that God calls you to share the gospel and teach people to obey all of His ways. God desires that all people be saved and we have the awesome privilege to join him in spreading the GOOD NEWS!

**Check which of the following things you can do to be apart of fulfilling the Great Commission.**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ask God for boldness and sign and wonders | <input type="checkbox"/> Train others to obey Jesus and to make disciples also         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pray for people that don’t know Jesus     | <input type="checkbox"/> Start a new lifegroup   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lead people to believe in Jesus           | <input type="checkbox"/> Give money to support a missionary                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baptize those you lead to Jesus           | <input type="checkbox"/> Go to another country to share with those that have not heard |

**YOUR RESPONSE THIS WEEK:**

- Plan a time to go out with your trainer to share the gospel together.
- Pray and ask God for boldness and signs and wonders.
- Make a list of everyone you know that does not know Jesus. Then make a plan to share with them. For accountability, share the plan with the one taking you through this lesson.
- Agree with the one taking you through this lesson on a realistic but challenging goal to share the gospel this week.
- Share these lessons with someone who is ready to be trained.

# Stories in the Foundations Discipleship lessons

*In progress*

## **Lesson One**

### ***Story on sin and our need for God – Harriet Tubman***

Harriet Tubman was a devout Christian, God used to help dozens of men and women find freedom from slavery in the mid-1800s. Born into slavery herself in Maryland, Tubman was beaten and whipped by her various owners as a child. When she was 29, she escaped from captivity. Soon after she returned to Maryland to rescue her family. Slowly, one group at a time, she brought relatives with her out of the state, and eventually made thirteen missions to rescue over seventy slaves using a network of safe, antislavery houses known as the Underground Railroad. Harriet would engage slaves in the fields inviting them to follow her and offering them a chance at freedom.

Unfortunately many of the slaves were to leave. Some of the slaves that had kind masters were comfortable with their lives and were too afraid to risk getting caught. At the end of her life, as she reflected on her experience with the Underground railroad, Harriet Tubman was quoted as saying, ***“I could have saved more slaves, if I could have convinced them they were slaves.”***

Experiencing the freedom that we can find through Jesus, begins with recognizing that you are enslaved to sin and that there is something better.

### ***Story on grace – Story of Two Brothers***

There were two brothers who were identical twins. On the outside they were identical, but on the inside they were very different. The first brother was very good and honest, and when he grew up he became a judge. The second brother was evil and sinful, and when he grew up he became a criminal.

One day, the evil brother committed a crime that was punishable by the death penalty. He was arrested and put in jail until the day he was to appear in court. On that day, he walked into the courtroom he saw that his brother was the judge sitting at the bench. He thought, “Yes! I’m going to be okay! I’ll probably still be prosecuted but at least I won’t get the death penalty, even though that’s what I deserve.”

At the end of his trial, however, the jury found him guilty and his brother sentenced him to death in three days time. As they were taking him out of the courtroom he was thinking, “I can’t believe my brother did that to me! Why did he do that?” He sat alone in jail for two days, desperate because he knew his life was going to end.

The good brother came to the jail to visit him on the second day and proposed a plan. He said, “Let’s exchange clothes with each other, and then you can walk out of here free. I’ll take your place...it’ll all work out in the end.” The evil brother though it was a great idea, so they traded clothes and the evil brother left while the good brother stayed in his place.

The next morning at six o’clock, the evil brother came back to the jail, curious to see what would happen to his brother. He climbed on top of a wall so he could see when they brought his brother out. As he peeked over the wall to see what was going on, he heard a volley of shots, and his good brother fell to the ground dead. The evil brother fled in shock, and eventually found his way to his brother’s house. He went inside and he found a letter on the desk, addressed to him. It read:

*Brother,*

*You committed a crime, so someone must die.*

*I love you, so I took your place. From now on,*

*please live a different life.*

This is a picture of what Jesus did for us when he took our sin onto himself. This is a picture of grace.

## **Lesson Two**

### ***Personal testimony on when and how you started spending time with God***

Share your experience in spending time with God. When you started. What you do. Encouraging ways that God has use prayer, the Bible and a devotions in your life.

### ***Story on the power of prayer - 16 Guards***

During the Mau Mau uprising in Kenya in 1960, missionaries Matt & Lora Higgins were returning to Nairobi one night through the heart of Mau Mau territory, where Kenyans and missionaries alike had been killed and dismembered. Seventeen miles outside of Nairobi their Land Rover broke down, and Higgins tried to repair the car in the dark but could not get it started. They spent the night in the car and prayed Psalm 4:8 over and over, “I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.” In the morning light, they were able to repair the car.

A few weeks later, the Higgenses returned to America on furlough. They reported that on the night before they left Nairobi, a local pastor had visited them and told them of a visit from a local Mau Mau member. The man said that he and three others had crept up to the car to kill the Higgenses, but left in fear when they saw the sixteen men surrounding the car. “Sixteen men?” Higgins asked, “I don’t know what you mean!”

While they were on furlough, a friend of the Higgens' named Clay Brent asked them if they had been in danger recently. Higgens asked him why, and Clay said that on March 23, God had placed a heavy burden on his heart. He called the men of the church, to pray together until they felt the burden lift. The Higgens' asked, "How many men were at the prayer meeting?" Clay responded, "Sixteen."

-Touch the World through Prayer, 1986

## **Lesson Three**

### ***Story on our need for community and acceptance (TBD)***

#### ***Personal testimony on what the church has meant in your life***

Share your earliest memories of church (involvement, impressions, and misconceptions) and how your view of the church has changed through the years.

#### ***Personal testimony on being blessed by giving***

## **Lesson Four**

### ***Story on the need for a Father – Newspaper add for Paco***

Ernest Hemmingway tells a story of a young Spanish man named Paco who left his father to live a life of sin in the capital city, Madrid. After several months and fearing the worst for his son, the father went to Madrid in search of Paco. He took out an advertisement in the newspaper, which said, "Paco meet me at Hotel Montana noon Tuesday. All is forgiven. Papa." The next Tuesday the father went to the hotel hoping to find his son waiting for him. When he turned the corner and the hotel came in view, he saw a great crowd of 800 men gathered around the hotel. They were all named Paco. There is something in all of us that needs the love and acceptance of a father.

### ***Story on God's provision – George Mueller***

George Mueller was pastor in England for 66 years in the 1800's. He is most well known for the orphan ministry he began. He built 5 large orphan houses and cared and provided for over 10,000 orphans in his lifetime. Before he began his work there were only accommodations for 3000 orphans in all of England. Fifty years after his death there was space for over 10,000 orphans. It is estimated that during his lifetime George Mueller collected more than \$150 million (in today's currency) for the orphans. And according to his testimony and that of others he never asked anyone directly for money except God. When asked why he did this Mueller replied, "the gifts have been given to me without one single individual having been asked by me for anything. The reason why I have refrained altogether from soliciting anyone for help is, that the hand of God might be seen in the matter, That my fellow-believers might be encouraged more and more to trust in Him and that also those who do not know the Lord, have fresh proof that, indeed, it is not a vain thing to pray to God." George Mueller's life is a powerful encouragement to us that we can trust God to provide for us.

### ***Story on the love of God (TBD)***

## **Lesson Five**

#### ***Personal testimony on experiencing the presence of God***

Share an experience where you knew that God was real and with you. This could be at salvation or later in your life.

#### ***Story on Abiding in God—Brother Lawrence***

Brother Lawrence served as a cook in a French monastery in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. He was a simple, uneducated man who devoted his life to practicing the presence of God every moment, every day. He sought to make continual conversation with God even among the ordinary and routine duties of life. His simple life brought him unsolicited attention. Men, women and children would travel from around the country to watch him in his kitchen cooking and talking with God. In his book entitled *Practicing the Presence of God* he summed his devotion to abiding with God in these words: "there is not in the world a life more sweet and delightful than that of a continual conversation with God."

#### ***Personal testimony on being baptized in the Holy Spirit***

Share about your first experience in being baptized with the Holy Spirit.



## **Lesson Six**

### ***Story on victory over sin (TBD)***

#### ***Story on surrender – Jim Elliot***

In the last weeks of 1955, Jim Elliot along with four other men, made contact with a tribal Indians in the jungles of Equador,. There intention was to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to this people, known at the time as the Aucas, who had never heard it. They built a camp on the edge of a river a short distance from the Indian camp. After several very promising encounters with them, the Aucan warriors turned on the missionaries, attacked them, speared them and killed them.

Years later his wife Elizabeth published excerpts from his journals in the book, “Shadow of the Almighty”. It records a statement from Jim’s college years when he was making the decision to surrender his life to follow Christ even unto death. It serves as mantra today for all of those that would live wholeheartedly for God. Jim wrote, “He is no fool, who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.”

#### ***Story on love – Elizabeth Elliot, Rachel Saint***

The death of the 5 missionaries in Equador received world-wide attention after a ten page cover article in *Life magazine*. Many were outraged. The families were obviously devastated. Anyone would have understood if they would have returned home to rebuild their lives. However, a love and compassion for these people, the Aucas, who did not yet know Jesus remained in many of their hearts. In the summer of 1958, Rachel Saint, sister of Nate Saint, one of the missionaries along with Elizabeth Elliot, wife of Jim Elliot returned to the jungle to again attempt to make contact with the very Aucan Indians who had killed there loved ones. The women were received by the tribe and began to share the good news about Jesus Christ. One by one the Indians began to accept Christ and in the months that followed the tribal warfare that had characterized this people had all but ceased. The love and forgiveness of Rachel Saint and Elizabeth Elliot for those they could have easily considered their enemies, opened the door for an entire people to come to hear and see the saving love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

## **Lesson Seven**

### ***Story on a demonstration of power in evangelism (TBD)***

#### ***Personal testimony on the impact of life on life evangelism and discipleship***

Share about the person who lead you to the lead and / or someone who had major impact on your life personally.