

# FOUNDATIONS

The **First Three Steps** in Your Pursuit of GOD

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## **FOUNDATIONS**

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## Introduction | Investigating God

Most people have questions about God. What is truth? Where do I find it? What does it matter to me? Some people have a deep need that causes these questions. Others are more casual in their exploration. This guide is designed to help anyone, no matter what has led them to investigate.

The first step in this booklet is for those who are ready to learn what the Bible says about starting a relationship with Jesus. If you're ready for that right now, turn the page and begin.

If you've still got some fundamental questions about God, you may want to investigate first. There are three good ways to seek answers about truth. This is your own journey, so choose the path that is most appropriate for you.

### **Investigate at church**

For many people, the best way to find answers about God is by attending a local Christian church. As you attend, take note of the focus on Jesus and the sense of joy and freedom evident in people's lives. To find a Christian church in your area that offers FOUNDATIONS, visit [www.rednotes.org](http://www.rednotes.org).

### **Investigate with a friend or in a group**

Perhaps a spouse, a neighbor or a friend has been a great resource for you. You trust their perspective and their desire to help you find answers. You'll find a helpful tool in the QUESTIONS booklet, which addresses the three most common barriers to faith. It includes useful discussion questions designed for small groups or one-on-one study and is available online at [rednotes.org](http://rednotes.org).

### **Investigate on your own**

Some people feel social pressure from their family, friends or even church. If this is you, you may not feel free to ask questions or investigate other options. We've set up a pathway for you to get answers on your own. If you'd like to explore anonymously at your own pace, visit [rednotes.org](http://rednotes.org).

*Explore at your own pace for as long as you desire. But pursuing God is not just about investigating initial questions. At some point you'll be ready to complete 101, the first and most important step in laying a foundation for your relationship with God. When you're ready for that, turn the page.*

*Read this section as often as you'd like on your own, but in order to complete this step it's best to talk it over with a Christian friend who has completed it – or attend a Sunday morning 101 workshop at church.*

### **The Defining Moment**

Imagine a husband and wife going through old photos of their journey together. Dating, engagement, the birth of their children – moments that carry a sense of deep meaning and joy. But of all the moments in their lives, there is one that stands out above the rest. It is their defining moment as a couple, the moment that gives meaning to every other moment for them. Without this moment their relationship would be incomplete. *It is the moment they said “I do” to each other on their wedding day.*

In your pursuit of God there is also a defining moment. It's not when you started going to church or when you started reading the Bible. Those are “dating” moments – meaningful times that are very important and full of memories. But if you want to enter into a relationship with God, you'll need to go a step further and make a personal commitment to him.

***The defining moment in your relationship with God is the moment you choose to put your faith in Jesus Christ.***

The Bible teaches that when you put your faith in Jesus, everything changes. Your life is re-defined. You are given a new sense of joy and freedom. It's even more life-changing than a person's wedding day.

This moment – the moment of faith – is the single most important decision of your life. This chapter is designed to lead you to that moment by laying out three fundamental principles taught in the Bible.

#### **1 Your relationship with God needs to be fixed.**

Society teaches us that we are all basically good people. It tells us that God is generally pleased with the direction of our lives. But that's not the truth. The Bible actually tells a different story. It says we're broken, and that we've broken God's heart with our actions and intentions.

*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.* Romans 3:23

Simply defined, sin is choosing our own path instead of God's path. Sin is when we rebel against God, thinking we know better and making choices that go against what he desires for us. And the Bible says every one of us has sinned. So here's the problem: God wants to be in relationship with us, but our sin makes that impossible. The Bible describes the ultimate result:

*The wages of sin is death.* Romans 6:23

**Discuss** | Think about your own life: your emotions, actions, thoughts. Can you give an example of how sin has tainted some of those areas?

## 2 Jesus alone can fix your relationship with God.

Most people recognize that they're not perfect. It's no surprise to them that they've offended God. So they figure they can just pull themselves up by their bootstraps and start working to make things right. They believe that as long as the good outweighs the bad in their lives, God will be happy.

But that's not how it works. The Bible says we're all so broken that we can't even begin to make things right. Think of it like this: if fixing our relationship with God were a race, no amount of religious effort could even get us off the starting block. On a scale of 1 to 10, we're stuck at 0.

So we can do nothing to fix things with God. That's where Jesus comes in.

*You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.* Romans 5:6

Jesus was born into the world and lived a perfect life. Even though he never sinned, he went to the cross and died a criminal's death. Three days later he rose from the dead, proving his authority over sin and death.

Jesus took our sin upon himself at the cross to fix our relationship with God. How much of it did we do? 0%. How much did Jesus do? 100%. We can add nothing to the generous work that Jesus completed for us on the cross.

**Discuss** | Most religions teach that you have to gain God's approval by your good deeds. Christianity is different. Can you explain what the Bible teaches?

### **3 Nothing gets fixed without faith.**

It's foundational to know that your relationship with God needs to be fixed, and it's crucial to acknowledge that Jesus alone can fix that relationship. But without your personal response in faith to Jesus, his death does nothing for you. Faith is what activates the power of the cross in our lives.

Faith, simply put, is trusting in the finished work of Jesus. It's putting all of your confidence and hope in him. And like a coin, faith is two-sided.

#### **Faith starts with the right information.**

What you believe about Jesus matters. Some people say he was just a good man. Others say he was simply a prophet. That kind of Jesus doesn't save, because it's not the truth about him. If you believe in anything short of the biblical Jesus, you've got the wrong one.

If you want to have a genuine moment of faith – a moment that fixes your relationship with God – then you must have the right information about Jesus. You have to know that he's God himself, not just a good man or a wise prophet. You have to know that he died on the cross for your sins. And you have to believe that God raised him from the dead.

*If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.* Romans 10:9

The right info about Jesus is the basic starting point for your moment of faith. Some people think they need to know the whole Bible before they can make a faith response to Jesus. But that's not true. Once you have learned the basics about the person and work of Jesus, you've got all the information you need.

**Discuss |** Make a list of the fundamental information about Jesus that you have learned so far in your pursuit. Do you have any questions about Jesus? Do you feel you have enough info about him to make a response of faith?

#### **Faith is completed with the right attitude**

The "moment of faith" starts with the right information about Jesus. But the Bible says that even the demons have this information, yet demons are not right with God. There's more to faith than just intellectual agreement.

Genuine, saving faith in Jesus also involves the attitude of your heart. The Bible calls the proper attitude toward Christ “repentance”.

*Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.* Acts 3:19

Repentance, the attitude of faith, says, “I’ve changed my mind about Christ. I accept Him as my Savior and Lord.” It’s a new direction, a new orientation of a person’s life toward Christ. Saving faith is part of a fundamental change in the life of the believer. It’s not just on the surface.

There’s no such thing as a one-sided coin. And there’s no such thing as one-sided faith. Saving faith always combines the right info with the right attitude.

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Today, if you put your faith in Jesus, confessing the right information with the right attitude, welcoming him into your life as Savior and Lord, then you’ll be saved. Saved from the consequences of your sin. Saved from eternal death and separation from God. And saved to live a new and meaningful life here on earth in a growing relationship with him.

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.* Ephesians 2:8-9

**Are you ready for your defining “moment of faith”?** If so, pray a prayer like this: *“Jesus, I recognize I’m a sinner. I know that you died for me, and I want you to be my Savior and God. Thank you for this free gift. Amen.”*

**Next Steps:** Check the most appropriate box and determine your next step.

- Today I put my faith in Jesus.**

*Today’s Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Next Step:* Turn the page and prepare for 201

- This was a refresher course for me; I am already a Christian.**

*Next Step:* Turn the page and prepare for 201

- I’ve heard the basics, but I’m not yet ready for my moment of faith.**

*Next Step:* Continue to investigate and repeat 101 when ready

## What's Next | The Big Picture

Before we move on to the next step in your pursuit of God, let's pause and consider the entire process in the big picture. This booklet – *Foundations* – is all about laying a proper foundation for your pursuit of God.

**101** leads you to understand your defining “moment of faith”. It is the first building block, the cornerstone in your foundation.

**201** lays out a useful blueprint for your pursuit of God that will help you as you build on your foundation in the years ahead.

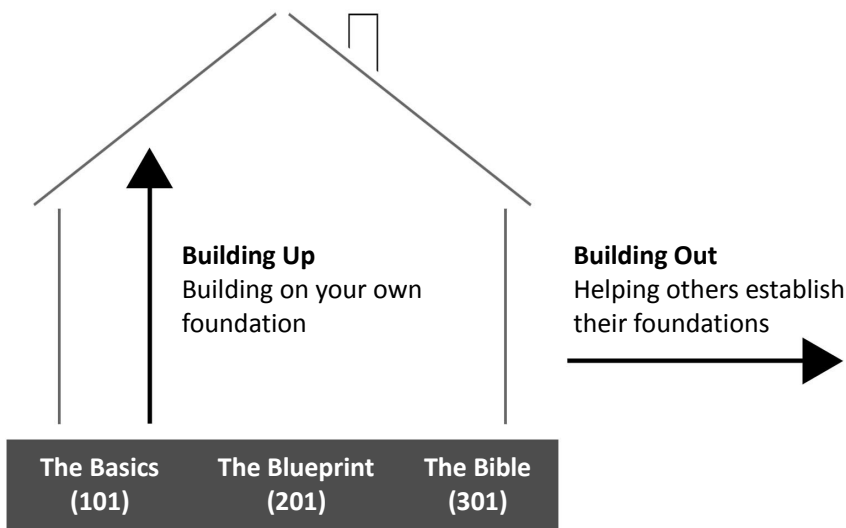
**301** is the final element in your foundation, a 6-month tour through the most powerful discipleship curriculum of all time – the Bible itself.

When you've finished laying your foundation, your lifelong pursuit of God can be simply defined in terms of two God-honoring tasks:

**Building Up:** Building on your own foundation by pursuing God through biblical truth, intentional relationships and outward purpose.

**Building Out:** Helping others establish their foundations in Christ by inviting them to pursue God and helping them through *Foundations*.

Visit [rednotes.org/201](http://rednotes.org/201) for the “What's Next” video on this topic.



## 201 | The Blueprint for Pursuit

Pursuing God doesn't involve mastering a complicated system of religion; it's about developing a relationship with God. But just like with any relationship, your connection with God can grow and flourish over time or it can stagnate and even decline. In this workshop you'll learn three key areas which are vital for pursuing God: biblical truth, intentional relationships and outward purpose. These three areas – with ten memorable axioms along the way – will give you a framework that will help your relationship with God to grow throughout your life. Learn more about completing 201 at [rednotes.org/201](http://rednotes.org/201).

### WEEK 1 | Pursuing Biblical Truth

▶▶ Video 1: *A New Way to Live*

**Axiom #1: Find out what pleases God and \_\_\_\_\_.**

#### Questions for Discussion

How have you seen your “new direction” at work? Give specific examples.

▶▶ Video 2: *Finding Truth*

**Axiom #2: The \_\_\_\_\_ is our guide.**

#### Questions for Discussion

1. Where do people go to find spiritual truth? What makes the Bible the best place to go for truth?
2. How does the Bible help you “build up”? How does it help you “build out”?

▶▶ Week 1 Bonus Video: *Baptism*

#### Questions for Discussion

Have you been baptized? If so, did you understand what it meant?

If you haven't been baptized as a Christian, schedule a date as soon as possible. Invite others to attend. **Baptism Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## WEEK 2 | Pursuing Biblical Truth (*continued*)

» Video 3: *Theology Matters*

**Axiom #3:** \_\_\_\_\_ on the majors.

### Questions for Discussion

1. Why do we tend to create God in our image? What are the consequences?
2. How should we approach people who differ with us on the minor issues?

» Week 2 Bonus Video: *An Overview of the Majors*

### Statement of Faith

**The Bible** | We believe the Bible, composed of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is inspired, authoritative, and infallible in its original manuscripts. It is, therefore, the only complete and final authority in faith and life. 2 Tim 3:16-17; 2 Pet 1:19-2; Jn 17:17; Rom 3:4; Jn 20:30-31; Matt 24:35

**God** | We believe in a sovereign, triune God. By His power He spoke the world into existence. God alone is self-determined, self-governed, and self-sufficient. He is eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Each possesses all the attributes of deity. All are equal in power and glory. Rom 1:18-20; Jn 1:18; 1 Cor 2:16; Deut 6:4; Matt. 3:16-17, 28:19; Isa 46:10

**Jesus Christ** | We believe Jesus Christ was, is, and always will be the Son of God. He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, performed many signs and wonders, died on a cross, and rose from the dead in a glorified body. He ascended to the right hand of God the Father where He continually makes intercession for His people. At the appointed time He will come again to earth to consummate God's plan in salvation history. Matt 1:20-23; Jn 1:1,2; Rom 3:24, 25; Rom 8:34; Phil 2:5-10; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 1:1-3; Heb 7:25

**The Holy Spirit** | We believe in the Holy Spirit's effective role in God's plan for His Kingdom. Without the influence of the Holy Spirit no one can participate in Kingdom Life. The Spirit's first (and necessary) work is in conversion: to enlighten sinners and awaken them to their need for a Savior. At the point of salvation the Holy Spirit immediately indwells believers and begins empowering them to live to please God. The Spirit also gives them a new identity, assuring them of their proper standing with God. Jn 14:16,17,26; 16:7-15; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; Gal 5:22-26; Eph 1:13-14

**Humanity** | We believe God created mankind in His own image. At the beginning of human history, however, man chose to disobey the sovereign God and so brought sin onto the earth. All people everywhere have since been born into this sinful nature and are subject to God's righteous judgment: death and eternal separation from Himself. Gen 1:26; 3; Rom 3:23; 6:23; Jer 17:9; Jn 3:18; Eph 2:1-3

**Salvation** | We believe God's plan from the beginning of time was to be in relationship with all people. Since sin makes that relationship impossible for everyone, God established a way to credit righteousness. He accepts Jesus Christ's death on the cross as a payment for the sin of humanity. Those who repent of their sin and believe in God's work are forgiven and restored to relationship with God. This is salvation, and it is God's work from beginning to end, so that we are saved purely by grace. Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-7; Jn 3:16-17; Rom 3:24-26; 2 Cor 5:17; Rom 8:1; 1 Jn 5:11-13; Jn 1:12

**The Church** | We believe in one true universal church, comprised of all who genuinely acknowledge the message of the gospel of God's grace through Jesus Christ. This church, we believe, has many valid local expressions and denominations. God through the Holy Spirit equips every believer with spiritual gifts for the edification of the body of Christ. Mature believers recognize this and participate in God's work alongside other followers of Christ. 1 Cor 12:12; Eph 1:22-23; 2:19-22; Phil 1:1; Acts 2:42; 1:8; Matt 28:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26

**Sacraments** | We believe that Scripture affirms two ordinances in the church: water baptism and communion. Believers should participate in both sacraments. Matt 28:19; Acts 8:35-39; Rom 6:1-5; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor 11:23-26

**Eternal Destiny** | We believe every person's eternal destiny is sealed at the moment of death. God knows those who are His own. Those who have accepted His free grace through Jesus Christ will live forever to glorify Him. Unbelievers will be judged with righteousness and separated forever from His presence. 2 Cor 5:6-10; Luke 23:40-43; Phil 1:23; Jn 5:29; Matt 25:46; 1 Cor 15:51-55; Heb 9:27-28; Rev 22:3-5

### Questions for Discussion

1. Are you surprised by this list? Do you think it's too short? Too long?
2. Which doctrines are you most interested in exploring in the next step?
3. How does theology help you "build up"? How does it help you "build out"?

▶▶ Video 4: *God In Us*

**Axiom #4:** You can't know or grow without the \_\_\_\_\_.

## WEEK 3 | Pursuing Intentional Relationships

▶▶ Video 5: *Intentional with God*

**Axiom #5: Your first relationship is with \_\_\_\_\_.**

### Questions for Discussion

1. What goes into developing a deep relationship with someone? What does this look like in our relationship with God?
2. Why is prayer difficult? How can we grow in our prayer lives?
3. How does prayer help you “build up”? How does it help you “build out”?

### Notes

▶▶ Video 6: *Intentional with Others*

**Axiom #6: God doesn't want \_\_\_\_\_ .**

### Questions for Discussion

1. Have you ever known someone who was truly encouraging to you? What did they do and how did it help?
2. Have you ever had someone share the “last 10%” with you? Did it help?
3. How do relationships with others help you “build up” and “build out”?

### Notes

▶▶ Week 3 Bonus Video: *Connect with a Few*

## WEEK 4 | Pursuing Outward Purpose

▶▶ Video 7: *Foot Washing*

**Axiom #7: If you're following Jesus, you're following a \_\_\_\_\_.**

### Questions for Discussion

1. What was so shocking about Jesus washing the disciples' feet?
2. Why do you think so many Christians eventually become self-serving?
3. Why is a self-serving life so unfulfilling? What are some areas of your life that don't match up with the attitude of Jesus?

*Notes*

▶▶ Video 8: *The Team Approach*

**Axiom #8: Everyone has a place on the \_\_\_\_\_.**

### Questions for Discussion

1. How have you seen others use time and talents for the team at church?  
How did it make a difference in your life?
2. Describe how it feels when you are using your talents to serve others.
3. How does serving help you “build up”? How does it help you “build out”?

*Notes*

▶▶ Week 4 Bonus Video: *Spiritual Gifts*

## WEEK 5 | Pursuing Outward Purpose (*continued*)

»» Video 9: *The Grace of Giving*

**Axiom #9: It's God's money – we're just \_\_\_\_\_ it.**

### Questions for Discussion

1. How does our financial management reveal what is important to us?
2. Why do you think it's hard for some people to start giving?
3. Which of the three giving principles seems most difficult to follow?
4. How does giving help you “build up”? How does it help you “build out”?

### Notes

»» Video 10: *Building Out*

**Axiom #10: Every disciple makes \_\_\_\_\_.**

### Questions for Discussion

1. Why is real spiritual maturity marked by making disciples?
2. Do you believe that every Christian has the ability to make a disciple?
3. Why don't more Christians focus on making disciples?
4. Disciple-making is “building out”. How does it help you “build up”?

»» Week 5 Bonus Video: *A Simple Plan*

*Now that you've completed 201, it's time for 301 – your final step in laying a foundation for your pursuit of God. If you're ready, turn the page.*

The final step in laying a foundation for your pursuit of God is to simply start reading the Bible. The New Testament is the second half of the Bible, and it focuses specifically on the person and work of Jesus Christ. Though the entire Bible is important, it's helpful to start with the New Testament. After you've read it a couple of times, you'll be ready to start the Old Testament – which finds fulfillment in what you read here.

You're encouraged to complete this step with a friend or in a group. Try to stay on schedule as you each read on your own, and touch base every couple of weeks using the discussion questions here as a guide. You won't understand everything in the NT your first time through, so we've included a focus for each week to help you connect the readings to the axioms from 201. For additional commentary and useful sermon links, visit [rednotes.org/301](http://rednotes.org/301).

### WEEK 1

- John 1-2
- John 3-4
- John 5-6
- John 7-8
- John 9-10

### **THE DEITY OF JESUS** | Axioms 1-3

*One of the major teachings in the NT is that Jesus is God. In the first week of our reading we are confronted with this truth. From the opening words of John to Jesus' tense words with a hostile crowd, we learn that Jesus is unlike anyone who has come before or since. He is God.*

### WEEK 2

- John 11-12
- John 13-15
- John 16-17
- John 18-19
- John 20-21

### **THE CROSS** | Axiom 3

*The cross is central to the Christian message. It represents suffering and death. But ultimately it represents the forgiveness and new life we have in Jesus. Read "101" again and thank God for the power of the cross.*

### Questions for Discussion

1. What do we learn about Jesus the Word in John 1:1-18?
2. Read John 8:24. According to Jesus, what do we have to do be saved? How did the crowd respond to Jesus' words?
3. Discuss the moment you first put your faith in Jesus.

### **WEEK 3**

- Acts 1-2
- Acts 3-4
- Acts 5-6
- Acts 7-8
- Acts 9-10

### **THE CHURCH | Axioms 4 and 10**

*The book of Acts describes the beginning of the Christian church. When Jesus left, he gave his followers a mission: to help people pursue God. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the message of Jesus spread quickly, and the early church exploded in growth.*

### **WEEK 4**

- Acts 11-12
- Acts 13-15
- Galatians 1-2
- Galatians 3-4
- Galatians 5-6

### **JEWS AND GENTILES | Axiom 3**

*The church started off as a Jewish movement but quickly included Gentiles (non-Jews). The church leaders grappled with an important question: Did Gentiles have to accept the Jewish religion to become Christians? Traditionally, Gentile converts to Judaism were required to be circumcised. Was this still necessary now that Jesus had come? These chapters explain the shocking answer that changed the church forever.*

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. List all the ways we see the Holy Spirit at work in the early church. Do you think the Holy Spirit works the same way today?
2. Why do you think the early church grew so quickly?
3. The apostle Paul wrote Galatians to combat the dangerous teaching of the "Judaizers" - men who taught that Gentiles had to follow all of the Jewish rules to become Christians. How did Paul respond to that teaching?

### *Notes*

## WEEK 5

- 1 Thessalonians 1-3
- 1 Thessalonians 4-5
- 2 Thessalonians 1-3
- 1 Corinthians 1
- 1 Corinthians 2-3

### **LIVING TO PLEASE GOD | Axioms 1 and 2**

*The Christian life isn't always going to be easy. In fact, it's often very difficult. In the midst of life's struggles, temptations, and persecutions, following Jesus can seem impossible. Paul wrote these letters to the Thessalonian church to teach them how to live lives pleasing to God in the midst of life's struggles.*

## WEEK 6

- 1 Corinthians 4-6
- 1 Corinthians 7-8
- 1 Corinthians 9-10
- 1 Corinthians 11-12
- 1 Corinthians 13-14

### **THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH | Axioms 6-8**

*The Corinthians thought church was all about them. Instead of being a place where people pursued God, the church was marked by selfishness, sexual immorality and a denial of the power of the cross. Paul combats their false ideas by restoring the true purpose of the church. The church wasn't there to serve them. Instead, God had made them part of the church to serve others and glorify Jesus.*

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. According to 1 and 2 Thessalonians, how does our future hope in heaven enable us to live to please God on earth?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 12 again. How has God equipped you to be part of the team in your church?
3. How have you traditionally viewed church? Is it a place to get your needs met? Is it a place to serve God and others? Is it both?

### *Notes*

## WEEK 7

- 1 Corinthians 15-16
- 2 Corinthians 1-2
- 2 Corinthians 3-4
- 2 Corinthians 5-6
- 2 Corinthians 7-8

## **THE NEW COVENANT** | Axioms 4 and 10

*God works with his people through covenants. During the time of Moses, God had made a covenant with Israel – promising blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience. Israel was never able to obey God, but God had already planned something better. Through Jesus, a new covenant was introduced where God’s Spirit lives in us, enabling us to live as God desires and bring others to faith in Christ.*

## WEEK 8

- 2 Corinthians 9-10
- 2 Corinthians 11-12
- 2 Cor 13, James 1
- James 2-3
- James 4-5

## **EVERYDAY CHRISTIANITY** | Axioms 1 and 9

*James was a practical kind of guy. He was concerned with seeing what our faith looked like in everyday life. As a result, James left us this handy book on how to live wisely as a Christian. Notice how God wants us to live in regard to our money, our speech, our relationships and a whole array of other areas in life.*

## Questions for Discussion

1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:20-21. What does it mean to be Christ’s ambassadors?
2. Read James 2:14-17. What kind of “faith” does James describe in these verses? How does James envision our faith working itself out in our lives?
3. Choose one of the areas in the Christian life that James mentions (speech, money, etc). What are some steps you can take to grow in this area?

## Notes

## WEEK 9

- Matthew 1-2
- Matthew 3-4
- Matthew 5-6
- Matthew 7-8
- Matthew 9-10

### **DISCIPLESHIP** | Axioms 1, 5, 9

*The first part of Matthew contains the Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7), the most famous teaching of Jesus in the NT. It shows how following Jesus changes every part of our lives: our actions, our relationships, our attitudes and our thoughts. Nothing is left unchanged when we follow Jesus. As you read these chapters, consider how your life has changed since you met Christ.*

## WEEK 10

- Matthew 11-12
- Matthew 13-14
- Matthew 15-16
- Matthew 17-18
- Matthew 19-20

### **THE IDENTITY OF JESUS** | Axiom 3

*Who is Jesus? A good teacher, a prophet, something else? Matthew confronts us with a startling picture of Jesus. Jesus teaches with an authority that no human could possess. He has power over demons, creation, and disease. Through the careful telling of Jesus' story, the author gives us Jesus' true identity. He is God.*

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. What aspect of the Sermon on the Mount is most challenging to you? Why? How can you work to apply its truth to your life?
2. Why do you think Jesus wants us to come to him like a child (Matt. 18:2-4)?
3. Read Matthew 18:10-14. What is the point of this parable? What does it teach us about God?

### *Notes*

## WEEK 11

- Matthew 21-22
- Matthew 23-24
- Matthew 25-26
- Matthew 27-28
- Acts 16-18

## **ACCEPTING JESUS | Axiom 3**

*Jesus had some harsh things to say at the end of Matthew for those who reject him. He taught that those who believe in him would find eternal life, but warned that those who reject him will receive eternal separation from God. The last chapters of Matthew remind us why it is so important to have both the right information about Jesus and the right attitude toward him. Our eternity depends on it (see 101).*

## WEEK 12

- Acts 19-20
- Acts 21-22
- Acts 23-24
- Acts 25-26
- Acts 27-28

## **MAKING DISCIPLES | Axioms 4 and 10**

*The last half of Acts records the spread of the church all over the Roman empire. In fact, the church extends all the way to Rome, the world's capital at the time. The end of Acts reminds us that we are called to carry out God's mission in the world: to make disciples of Jesus Christ.*

## **Questions for Discussion**

1. Read Matthew 24:36-44. How does Jesus describe his return? How can we be prepared for it?
2. How does God use Paul's imprisonment to further the growth of the church? Have you seen God use trials like this in your life?
3. Why do you think God allows Christians to suffer and face persecution? Take some time today to pray for Christians who are truly suffering for Christ.

## *Notes*

### WEEK 13

- Romans 1-2
- Romans 3-4
- Romans 5-6
- Romans 7-8
- Romans 9-10

### **JUSTIFICATION** | Axioms 3 and 4

*If Paul has a masterpiece, it is the book of Romans. Romans covers the broad sweep of the Christian life: salvation, sanctification, and glorification. But at the heart of the book of Romans is justification: the moment that we put our faith in Jesus, God declares us righteous because the work of Jesus is credited to us. In that moment, we are forgiven of our sins and made right before God. It's our defining moment (101).*

### WEEK 14

- Romans 11-12
- Romans 13-14
- Romans 15-16
- Philippians 1-2
- Philippians 3-4

### **JOY** | Axioms 3 and 5

*Notice something about the book of Philippians. Paul wrote it from prison. In fact, he wasn't far from death. But consider the main theme of Philippians: joy. No matter what the circumstance, Paul teaches us to be filled with joy. Because we have an eternal hope in heaven, we can have everlasting joy.*

### Questions for Discussion

1. According to Romans, where do we see people justified by faith in the Old Testament (Rom 4)? What does this teach us about salvation?
2. Read Romans 12:2. What does Paul mean by "the renewing of your mind"? What needs to occur in the life of a Christian for this to happen?
3. Describe a circumstance in your life that has caused you stress. How can you apply Paul's instruction to rejoice (Phil 4) in your trial?

### Notes

## WEEK 15

- Ephesians 1-2
- Ephesians 3-4
- Ephesians 5-6
- Colossians 1-2
- Colossians 3-4

**GOD'S PLAN FOR THE WORLD | Axioms 3 and 6**  
*In Ephesians and Colossians, we learn about God's plan for the world. This plan began before creation and will find its fulfillment when Jesus returns. In the meantime, Paul gives us a vision of God's desire for our churches, our families and even our occupations – all transformed by the work of Christ.*

## WEEK 16

- Philemon, 1 Timothy 1
- 1 Timothy 2-4
- 1 Timothy 5-6
- 2 Timothy 1-2
- 2 Timothy 3-4

**SOUND DOCTRINE | Axioms 2, 3, 6**  
*Paul writes the letters of 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus to two young men whom he knew very well. Although they were young, Paul had entrusted to them the work of leading churches. Unfortunately, both churches were plagued by false teachers who taught false doctrine. In these letters, we learn just how important theology really is and how dependent we are on the Bible for that theology.*

### Questions for Discussion

1. How does God's ideal for the family (Eph 5) compare to the type of family you grew up in?
2. Take note of Paul's prayers in Ephesians and Colossians. What does he pray for? How can these insights help shape your prayer life?
3. According to 2 Timothy 3:16-17, what function does the Bible play in the life of a Christian?

### Notes

## WEEK 17

- Titus 1-2
- Titus 3, Mark 1
- Mark 2-3
- Mark 4-5
- Mark 6-7

## **JESUS THE SERVANT** | Axiom 7

*The gospel of Mark focuses on the role of Jesus as a servant. In his fast-paced style, Mark highlights for us how Jesus came to serve and save people. As God, he could have come with the full regalia of royalty. But that was not Jesus' mission. He came to serve and save people. How much more should we serve as we point others to Jesus?*

## WEEK 18

- Mark 8-9
- Mark 10-11
- Mark 12-13
- Mark 14
- Mark 15-16

## **THE CROSS** | Axioms 3 and 7

*Notice how Mark's Gospel always has the crucifixion in view. Why did Mark make the crucifixion so central to telling the story of Jesus? Because it is at the cross that Jesus took on our sins and paid the penalty we deserved. Salvation is only made possible through the cross.*

### Questions for Discussion

1. Read Mark 10:45. How do we see this lived out by Jesus in the gospels? Try to give specific examples.
2. Why do you think Jesus kept his identity hidden from the crowd for much of his ministry?
3. Is it difficult for you to look outward and serve those around you? How can you grow as a servant to others?

### Notes

## WEEK 19

- Hebrews 1-3
- Hebrews 4-6
- Hebrews 7-9
- Hebrews 10-11
- Hebrews 12-13

## **THE END OF RELIGION | Axiom 3**

*The author of Hebrews understood that the work of Christ was the end of religion. By this we mean that because of the sacrificial work of Jesus on the cross, we don't find salvation through religious rituals and ceremonies. We don't even find it through being good. We only find it through Jesus.*

## WEEK 20

- 1 Peter 1-3
- 1 Peter 4-5, 2 Peter 1
- 2 Peter 2-3, Jude
- 1 John 1-3
- 1 John 4-5, 2 Jn, 3 Jn

## **TRUTH AND LOVE | Axioms 3, 4, 7**

*This week we read several little books that we find at the end of the New Testament. Together, these books teach us to uphold truth and love. On the one hand, we need to be defenders of the faith. Theology matters and what we believe about Jesus determines our eternal destiny. But truth is not all that is important. Love is the characteristic that is meant to mark the Christian. As Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13, without love we have nothing.*

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. Why do you think it's so tempting for people to try to save themselves through religion? Has this been a temptation in your life?
2. Read Jude 1:3. What does it mean to contend for the faith? How would this look in your life this week?
3. Read 1 John 3:18. How can we love others "with actions and in truth"?

### *Notes*

## WEEK 21

- Revelation 1-2
- Revelation 3-5
- Revelation 6-7
- Revelation 8-9
- Revelation 10-11

### **AUTHENTIC WORSHIP | Axiom 5**

*Most people think of Revelation as a book about the end of the world. And it's certainly that. However, in the opening chapters of the book we see the greatest worship service in the history of the world break out as God is worshiped in his throne room.*

## WEEK 22

- Revelation 12-13
- Revelation 14-16
- Revelation 17-18
- Revelation 19-20
- Revelation 21-22

### **GOD'S LOVE WINS | Axiom 3**

*God gives us the end of the story before we experience it. That's what we read about in the second part of Revelation. But notice what happens in the story. The love and power of God triumphs over the forces of evil. Jesus vanquishes death, sin and Satan forever. God's justice crushes his enemies. As a result, Christians experience God's love, joy and peace for all eternity.*

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. Draw and label the circles of worship around God's throne in Revelation 4-5. What do you notice about the worship described in these chapters?
2. How is the description of heaven at the end of Revelation similar or different than what you thought heaven would be like?
3. What are several things that you most look forward to about heaven? Why?

### *Notes*

## WEEK 23

- Luke 1-2
- Luke 3-5
- Luke 6-7
- Luke 8-9
- Luke 10-12

## **THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE | Axiom 4**

*Jesus led a life filled with the Spirit. Luke points this out more clearly than any other gospel. Jesus' whole life was lived out under the power of the Spirit. Notice in Luke what the Christian life can look like as it is propelled by the Holy Spirit.*

## WEEK 24

- Luke 13-15
- Luke 16-18
- Luke 19-20
- Luke 21-22
- Luke 23-24

## **THE RESURRECTION | Axioms 3, 8, 10**

*As you finish your readings in the NT, remember the centrality of Christ and the cross. But Jesus didn't stay dead. No, he came back from the dead to demonstrate that he really is the Son of God. As such he grants authority to his followers to carry out his mission to the ends of the world, empowered by his Spirit, glorifying the Father. Are living out this mission in your life?*

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. List all the times in Luke the Spirit is mentioned in connection with Jesus' life. What kinds of things did the Spirit help Jesus to accomplish?
2. What does it mean that as Christians we have the same Spirit living in us that lived inside of Jesus?
3. Read Luke 24:45-49. What does this teach us about Jesus' mission? How can we help fulfill Jesus' mission?

### *Notes*

Congratulations, you've finished FOUNDATIONS! Now what?

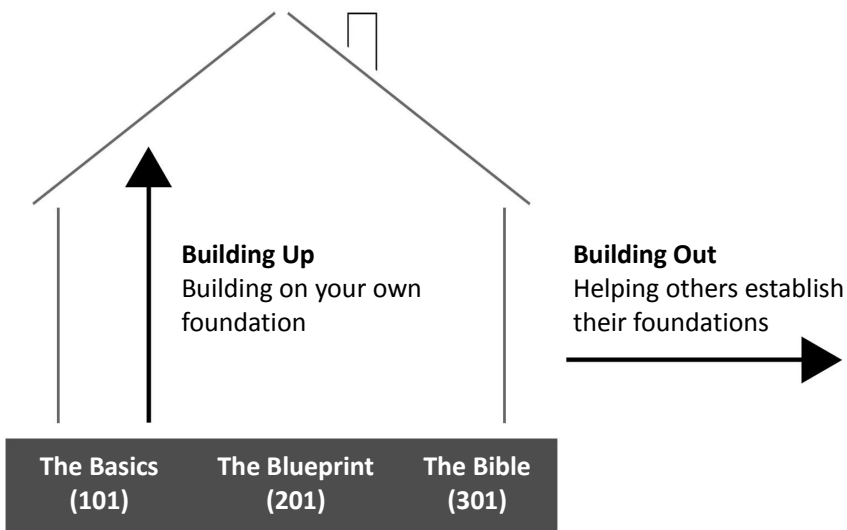
**Start building up.**

Find a small group, a place to serve or a Bible study class. Grow in the grace of giving financially. Develop your own spiritual disciplines like Bible study, prayer and fasting. Strengthen your relationships with others. If you're married, allow your marriage to be transformed by the truth of the Bible.

Your foundation is only the beginning of a vibrant, growing relationship with God. Though there are plenty of people who will help you as you build up, the ultimate responsibility is yours. You have to lead the charge, and you can – with the help of the Holy Spirit in your life. Start building up!

**Start building out.**

Your relationship with God is not just about you. There are others who need what you now have. You can't build other people's homes for them, but you can help them establish their foundations. Invite others to pursue God, and when the time is right, lead them through FOUNDATIONS. Start building out.



You may also like

**FOUNDATIONS for KIDS:**

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*Available at church or online at [rednotes.org](https://www.rednotes.org).*