



Christian Belief



---

“I do think a lot of Christians... get out into the world and find it very tough to navigate. I think it’s because they don't understand the gospel, not because they can’t answer all the theological questions.”

Tim Keller, 1950-2023

---



Welcome to **Foundations** for Christian Belief.

This is the first module in a series of three that we've developed at The Well Community Church to help you discover the heart of a disciple of Jesus Christ. Foundations is for everyone, whether you have questions about the Christian faith or you've believed for a long time. And anywhere in between.

We believe that the heart of a true disciple of Jesus Christ *seeks* to walk with God daily.

This is an endeavor for everybody. None of us grows or goes alone in the Christian life. *Your walk with God is a community project.* Each module is designed to engage with a community – *with God and one another.* It is a tool to help disciples in a one-on-one relationship and can also be used in a smaller group.

This first module focuses on **Christian Belief** – based throughout all of Scripture – to help you engage with the nature of God and man as shown in essential chapters from the Bible. These are the foundational answers to life's biggest questions – *Where did we come from? What went wrong with the world? Who do you say Jesus is? Where is all this headed?*, among others.

---

### How to Use Foundations

**There is a brief video introduction to each week's reading, consideration, and discussion.**

These can be found at [thewellargyle.com/foundations](http://thewellargyle.com/foundations) and are best viewed before you engage with the particular Bible chapters each week, selected to help you grow spiritually around foundational truths every believer needs to know and share.

Each day's passage will also have guided questions for **daily personal consideration with God**, and then **meeting with one another at least once each week to share** what you are experiencing, ask questions, and pray together.

**The reason for so much Bible** is because reading the Scriptures is not just a passive activity, it's an active one. Eugene Peterson puts it best:

*"In order to read the Scriptures adequately and accurately, it's necessary at the same time to live them... We open this book and find that on page after page it takes us off guard, surprises us, and draws us into its reality, pulls us into participation with God on his terms."*

Allowing the Bible to teach and speak to us is an important step in our continued spiritual growth. There are additional tools listed each week to help you dive deeper if you like. But additional tools and even great teachings do not replace reading God's own Word. The Scriptures not only reveal God to us but also everything about who we are before Him. We are invited to participate in what the Author is writing in this, His world.

## When You Are Reading the Bible

Pray Scripture before reading Scriptures.

Ask the Holy Spirit before each reading or listening to IOUS<sup>1</sup>...

- Incline my heart to your testimonies (Psalm 119:36)
- Open my eyes to see wonderful things (Psalm 119:18)
- Unite my heart to fear your name (Psalm 86:11)
- Satisfy me in the morning with your steadfast love (Psalm 90:14)

Ask of the Scripture when you are reading...

- What is the genre – type of literature – of the passage? Story? Poetry? Letter?
- What does the passage say to the original audience?
- What does the passage tell us about God?
- What does the passage tell us about human beings?
- What does the passage demand of me?
- How does this passage change the way I relate to people?
- How does this passage change the way I relate to God?
- How does this passage prompt me to pray?

---

<sup>1</sup> from *When I Don't Desire God: How to Fight for Joy* by John Piper

## MODULE 1: Foundations for Christian Belief

**Week 1** What is the gospel?

**Week 2** Where did we come from?

**Week 3** Did God really say?

**Week 4** Who do you say Jesus is?

**Week 5** Now what?

**Week 6** What can I do?

**Week 7** Where is this all headed?

—

**Appendix** Choosing a Bible translation

**Appendix** Summary Statements for Christian Belief

**Bibliography**





## Week 1 || What is the gospel?

This week you will look at...

Major sections of Paul's Letter to the Romans. It might be the most important theological letter ever written. The events in the letter – the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ – largely took place thirty years before Paul wrote it.

Your reading this week will include Paul's teachings on the implications of the well-documented and widely-witnessed life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. And what it means for each of us.

Some of these passages have been called "The Roman Road" because they best outline and summarize the most important truths of the Christian faith.

For a great introduction to The Bible, check out The Bible Project's video: [The Story of the Bible: What It's About From Beginning to End](#)

For more on the Paul's letter to the Romans, check out The Bible Project's video: [Book of Romans Summary: A Complete Animated Overview](#)

**The gospel** is the good news that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was born of a virgin, lived a perfect human life, died for our sins and rose again, forever triumphant over evil and death, so that there is now no condemnation for those who believe in Him to be the Savior of the world.



## **Monday**

Read or listen to Romans 1 and 3.

Consider or journal

Where do you see the truths of Romans 1 played out in our lives today? In your life?

How would the average person in our society react to verse 3:23?

Many historical figures say this passage – particularly verses 3:21-31 – changed their lives and world history. How is the message of God's grace impacting your own life?

## Tuesday

Read or listen to Romans 5

Consider or journal

How does this passage say that Christians look upon suffering and stress? What about disappointment? How does this differ from other approaches and attitudes? What's the difference maker?

From this passage, what are the blessings that come to a Christian? What blessings do you need most right now? You can pray to God and ask Him.

What must one do to benefit from what Christ did (verse 17)?

The "gift" is mentioned five times in verses 15-17: what is it? Who gives it? How is it received?

Are you living on the side of death (Adam) or on the side of life (Christ)? What was the change for you from death to life?

## Wednesday

Read or listen to Romans 6

Consider or journal

What motivates you to live a good life?

In this passage, “death” and “died” are used many times. What is the main point that Paul is trying to make?

How does this say that baptism is a symbol of what Christ did? What is “believer’s baptism”? Have you been baptized (which means to be totally immersed in water) since you decided to follow Jesus? When? If not, is that something you would like to talk to someone about further?

In what ways do people become “slaves to sin”? How can a person escape this?

What does it mean to be “dead to sin”?

What would it look like in your own life to practice verses 11-13?

What are the two choices we have to serve, according to verses 16-18?

### Thursday

Read or listen to Romans 8

Consider or journal

Who or what has most influenced you?

From verses 1-4, how would you explain the gospel to someone who feels they are not “good enough” for God?

In verses 5-11, what does Paul say about the option Christians have in living their life? What does this mean for you?

In verse 18 Paul talks about “present sufferings”. What present sufferings are you struggling with? What frustration (verse 20)? Share these things with God in prayer.

### **Friday**

Read or listen to Romans 8 again

Consider or journal

What does verse 26 tell us that the Holy Spirit does for us when we do not know how to pray? Have you ever experienced this? Ask the Spirit to help you pray today, for yourself and for others.

What confidence does verse 28 give Christian believers about events that occur in their lives? When has it been hard for you to believe this?



*Meet with one another each week to share and pray about what you are experiencing and learning as you move through Foundations.*

Share the gospel of Jesus Christ in your own words with one another as you meet together.

Share about what you've been reading/listening to in Romans this week. Perhaps share any thoughts or questions you wrote down.

Discuss: does the message of the gospel excite you? How would you describe what God may be doing in your heart, mind, and soul this week?

What is your own response to the gospel? To being baptized?



## What has gone wrong?

*"As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one;"* [Romans 3:10](#)

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"* [Romans 3:23](#)

*"For the wages of sin is death..."* [Romans 6:23a](#)

*"...but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* [Romans 6:23b](#)

## Who can save us?

*"But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*  
[Romans 5:8](#)

## What can I do?

*"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. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved."* [Romans 10:9-10](#)

*"For, 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"* [Romans 10:13](#)

## Who am I now?

*"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand."* [Romans 5:1-2](#)

*"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,"* [Romans 8:1](#)



## Week 2 || Where did we come from?

### What will you be looking at this week?

You're looking at the beginning of the story. The Bible's opening words are the beginning of the story of the world. In these first chapters of Genesis (and some corresponding New Testament passages) tell us how God created all things and made human beings in His own image.

This was the most peaceful time the world and universe ever had. There was no sin, suffering, or sadness. Everything was "very good." People were in right relationship with God, with one another, and with the creation itself. This is a picture of *shalom* – a Hebrew word for complete peace – for the entire cosmos.

For a deeper dive into Genesis 1, check out The Bible Project's video: [How Genesis 1 Communicates What the Whole Bible is About](#)



## **Monday**

Read or listen to [Genesis 1](#)

Consider or journal

What is your impression of the story of Creation?

How do you respond when you see all the things that God created?

How do you view God in light of reading Genesis 1?

## **Tuesday**

Read or listen to [Genesis 2](#)

Consider or journal

How does it affect you to hear that you are made in God's image? What questions does that bring to mind for you?

How does knowing that human beings alone are made in God's image impact how you see yourself? Your body? Other people? How should this affect your relationship with God? With other people?

What gives human beings their worth and dignity as humans, according to Genesis?

What does this story say about men and women?

What does it mean that Adam and Eve are described as "naked and they felt no shame"? What can this tell us about walking with God?

### **Wednesday**

[Read or listen to](#) John 1:1-5 and Colossians 1:15-20

Consider or journal

What does John 1:1-5 add to your perception of Genesis 1-2? Why would John write his account of the story of Jesus to begin with “in the beginning” rather than at Jesus’ birth?

What is the role of Jesus Christ in creation, according to Colossians 1:15-20? The “firstborn” has the rights of an heir. What rights does Jesus have according to verses 15-18? What is His relationship to “all things”?

### Thursday

Read or listen to Romans 1:20-25 and 11:1-3.

Consider or journal

What are some things in nature that you’ve seen that would confirm to you that God exists? Why those things?

This passage previews the theme of next week, where the world begins to get very dark because mankind rebels against God. This is one of the most descriptive passages in the Bible about creation and the “fall of mankind.” In verse 18, what did mankind do when given “the truth” about God?

## Friday

Read or listen to Genesis 1-2 again.

Consider and journal

Many Bible scholars suggest that verse 2:4 begins a summary of the creation story that begins in chapter 1. The creation account that continues in chapter 2 is a detailed review of the creation story as it relates to humanity. Why are we given a close look at how people fit into God's creation?

What do verses 1:26-29 and 2:7-25 tell us about our original nature and character before God and one another? What does it say about our original purpose and tasks? Our likeness to animals? Our likeness to God?

In Hebrew poetry and order – comprising much of these opening chapters of Genesis – there is significance to ascending order; that is to say that often what is created last is often a pinnacle. What does this say about the significance of the creation order of women?



*Meet with one another each week to share and pray about what you are experiencing and learning as you move through Foundations.*

Share with one another what you've been learning and considering this week.

What are you seeing about the scope of the story that God is telling in the Bible?

At times, what people or forces seem to be more powerful than God? Why is that? How do you respond to the fact that all of creation – including people – are created by God and under the authority of Jesus Christ?

God created us to be in loving relationships with Himself and others. Think about your friends and community. Do you reach out to others when you need help? Why or why not? Where do they point you for hope?

## Week 3 || Did God really say?

### What will you be looking at this week?

You're *still* looking at the beginning of the story. The Bible's opening words are the beginning of the story of the world. And how humanity fell into sin – rebellion against the creator God. As a result of humanity's rejection of God, the world is now filled with sin, suffering, and death. Life is not the way it is supposed to be.

But God doesn't leave us there. He promises that a son of Eve will conquer the enemy. This is the first promise of grace. And you'll see another as you read about God's interactions with a growing number of people across the planet. Cain and Abel. Noah. Abram... through whom God promises to bless "all the families of the earth."

For a helpful overview of the Book of Genesis, check out The Bible Project's videos: [The Main Message of the Book of Genesis, Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#).



## Monday

Read or listen to [Genesis 3](#)

Consider or journal

Why do you think the serpent mixes the truth (verses 1, 4, 5) with false statements (compare 3:4-5; 3:22)? How does the enemy still mix truth with lies in your life?

How does Eve hedge, fixate upon, and add to God's commands? How does that play into the enemy's schemes?

How do we still fall prey today to the same tempting question, "Did God really say...?"

Adam and Eve tried to cover up their shame with fig leaves. How do you generally react when you sin and are found out? When you think you got away with it? Where do you feel most "naked" before God?



Where in this story can you find any good news?

## Tuesday

[Read or listen to Genesis 4 - 5](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

God accepts both animal and grain sacrifices in the Old Testament (Leviticus 6:14-30). Why then do you think God rejected Cain's sacrifice?

If you had to name the sin or sins that led Cain to kill his brother Abel, what name would you give them?

Why did God protect Cain? In another story of a man in exile because of rebellion against God, where do you see the cycle of sin, judgment, and mercy repeating?

Genesis contains a series of genealogies such as the one in chapter 5. What purpose do you think these serve in the story that God is telling?

## Wednesday

Read or listen to Genesis 6 - 9

Consider or journal

What do you observe has happened to the world because of mankind's rebellion against God as you read the opening of chapter 6?

What do you find most disturbing about the description of human corruption in verse 5? Why? What would most disturb someone who believes that human nature is essentially good?

Why do you think God is grieved by human wickedness (verse 6)?

God makes a covenant with Noah. Covenants in this time often resembled a contract between a king and his subject in which sovereign protection is given as the subject is obedient to the commands. How is God's covenant with Noah before the flood (6:13-7:5) like this? What does this tell you about God's nature and character?

Why do you think God didn't just wipe out the human race altogether? To what future and solutions does God's mercy point? 9:1-17 show a further covenant that God made with Noah (and his heirs). Why does God repeat for Noah much of what He told Adam? Why the new instructions about lifeblood and murder? What does this say about God's view of human life?

Had you ever heard the end of Noah's story before? From this story of his later years in chapter 9, what is your lasting impression of Noah as a representative of humankind?

### Thursday

[Read or listen to Genesis 10 - 11](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

Why might it be important for God's people to understand the ties between themselves and the various groups around them? How might a genealogy such as the one in chapter 10 help?

Imagine someone were to write such a brief account of your life, following this Genesis 10 pattern. How would it read? ... "I was born in \_\_\_\_\_, to parents who \_\_\_\_\_, My greatest accomplishment in life was \_\_\_\_\_ as typified in my life's motto, \_\_\_\_\_."

What is the motivation for the people to build the Tower of Babel? In light of the relationship between man and God since Genesis 3, why would the Lord be concerned that “nothing they plan will be impossible for them”?

What’s the lesson of the story of Babel for empire building – nation, corporate, or personal? For church-building? For human ambition?

### Friday

[Read or listen to Genesis 12](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

Abram would later have his name changed by God to Abraham (“father of many”) and be made the founder of the Jewish people. As you read in this chapter, what do you think was the main reason Abram/Abraham was willing to pick up and take off into the unknown?

Have you ever learned or listened to hear God’s call on your own life?

When it comes to your faith in God and the sense of what He has for you, which response is closest to your heart’s response?

- I’m ready to go, even if it means the unknown.
- I’m sure God has a plan for me, but I don’t see it.
- I don’t know how to have faith in God’s plan for me.
- What if I don’t like what He calls me to do?

How does God's promise to Abraham relate to His promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the head of the serpent? To restore to humankind the blessing of knowing him and walking freely with him in a flourishing world? Bringing together the now-scattered nations of the world? To bless all the people of the earth?



*Meet with one another each week to share and pray about what you are experiencing and learning as you move through Foundations.*

Share with one another the ways you are convicted that you disregard God's voice and follow another voice to pursue your own desires apart from Him.

What do you do and where do you turn in your own sin and suffering?

How do you attempt to ease your suffering, your boredom, your guilt, your discomfort with the way life is?

Have you ever built a "tower" for yourself only to see it "scattered" by God? Share what happened and what you learned.

## Week 4 || Who do you say Jesus is?

### What will you be looking at this week?

You will read Mark's gospel account this week. Mark shows us who Jesus is and what He has come to accomplish.

"Who do you say that I am?" This may be the most important question Jesus asks, and the most important question for us to answer. You will see Jesus fulfill many of the promises God made in the Old Testament, beginning with Genesis.

The Old Testament starts the true story of the world, but it lacks an ending. God promised that a child of the woman would crush the head of the enemy and that through covenant promises made with Noah, Abraham, and later Moses and David, God would preserve a family line through which this Savior would arrive and fulfill every promise.

The question of Mark's gospel is clear: Who do you say Jesus is?  
And how do you receive Him? Will you follow Him?

For a deeper dive into the Gospel of Mark, check out The Bible Project's videos: [Gospel of Mark Summary: A Complete Animated Overview](#) and [Mark](#)



## Monday

Read or listen to Mark 1 - 3

Consider or journal

Another letter in the New Testament reflects on Jesus' life, saying, "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15). What is significant about Jesus' baptism and his being tempted in the desert immediately afterward?

Jesus shows his authority over the spiritual realm in 1:21-28. What goes through your mind when you read or hear Bible passages about evil spirits? How did you see Jesus' authority amaze the people when he commanded the demons out of the man (verse 27)?

Jesus shows his authority over sickness – both physical and spiritual – in Mark 1: 29-34. What do you think the crowds were looking for in Jesus? According to 1:38 - 39, how did Jesus view His mission?



Jesus shows his authority to forgive sin and heal paralysis in Mark 2. How is sin like paralysis? Which is ultimately more threatening if unhealed? What freedoms does Jesus' forgiveness of sins give you? Where do you need to hear that you are forgiven by God?

Jesus shows his authority over the sabbath day and his compassion to heal in 2:23-3:6. A conflict arises from the Pharisee's adherence to their interpretations of Old Testament laws about the sabbath. Jesus refers to a story of David choosing life over tradition. What does this story tell us about Jesus' authority and priorities?

## **Tuesday**

[Read or listen to Mark 4 - 8](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

Of the four soils in Mark 4:1-20, which best describes your response to the gospel when you first heard it? Which describes the condition of your heart right now?

Those who trust and follow Jesus become His new people. They are able to understand his parables, which teach truths of the kingdom's arrival: although many expected the kingdom to arrive on the scene in all its fullness, Jesus compares it to a lamp just lit, and a tiny seed planted in the ground. What do you observe about God's coming kingdom from the parables that Jesus tells in chapter 4?

Jesus shows his authority over all of nature when he calms the storm. How does this connect to what you read in Genesis, John 1, and Colossians 1?

What three things that characterized Jesus' ministry did he send His disciples to do in 6:12-13?

Jesus shows his authority to provide by feeding the five thousand. How do you want to ask Him to feed you spiritually this week?

Who is Jesus revealing Himself to be when he walks on water in 6:45-56?

Jesus again miraculously feeds a multitude of people in Mark 8. When do you sometimes doubt His ability to meet your needs?

## Wednesday

Read or listen to Mark 9 - 11

Consider or journal

Who is Jesus according to the Transfiguration in Mark 9?

How does this picture of a suffering Savior shape your view of what the Christian (“Christ follower”) life is all about? What would that mean for you, either being a Christian or becoming a Christian?

The father of the boy with an evil spirit recognized where he had unbelief. He asked Jesus for help with this (9:24). Where have you felt this? What kind of doubts hit you hardest? Future concerns? Issues with having faith? You can pray this same prayer over these areas: “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”

What must one do to receive eternal life, according to Jesus’ interaction with the rich young man? What would be a modern equivalent? What would you do if Jesus asked you to sell everything you had and give away the proceeds to be obedient to Him? What gives Him the authority to even ask that of someone?

What was unexpected about the way Jesus entered Jerusalem in chapter 11? Has He entered your life unexpectedly? What's surprised you most about Jesus as you are reading this gospel account?

## Thursday

Read or listen to Mark 12 - 14

Consider or journal

What does the parable of the tenets say about Jesus' authority?

Mark 12:29-31 are often referred to as The Great Commandment and another like it. Why are these two the greatest commandments? What does that mean for your life and living?

Jesus shows His authority to know the end of the age in chapter 13. What in His description bothers you? What in His description gives you hope, if any?

Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper; why is it important for Christians to still observe communion today? What does the Lord's Supper mean to you? Before you take communion next time, how will this reading affect your approach?

Just after the Last Supper and before His arrest, Jesus goes to a garden outside of Jerusalem to pray. What did he ask God when He prayed? What did you learn about Jesus from this account?

### **Friday**

[Read or listen to Mark 15 - 16](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

Why do many of the people who witnessed Jesus' miracles, heard His teachings, and praised Him with "hosannas", now demand that Jesus be crucified?

What is significant about the centurion's words at the death of Jesus?

Who did Jesus send to you to tell you He has risen? Do you have trouble believing that He is alive? What convinced you, or would convince you?

What do you see as your role in sharing "the good news to all creation" (16:15)?

How would your life be different if Jesus was not risen from the dead?

What will you remember most from your time in the Gospel of Mark this week?



*Meet with one another each week to share and pray about what you are experiencing and learning as you move through Foundations.*

Share what stood out to you this week in Mark's gospel.

Share in your own words the "good news" mentioned in Mark 1:15.

Considering all the places that Jesus asserts His authority in Mark, What does that make Jesus: leader? king? sovereign God?

What did Jesus say is the basis for a family relationship with him (3:35)? Share what this looks like in your lives.

How can we help each other in our spiritual lives to produce an abundant crop?

Of the responses to Jesus in 3:8, 3:21-22, and 3:34-35, which best describes your relationship to him now? Why?

How have you been relating to Jesus' authority in your life this week?





## Week 5 || Now what?

### What will you be looking at this week?

The direct sequel to the gospel accounts is the Book of Acts. As the next chapter in the story of God and the world He created, we get let in on how the risen Jesus Christ shared His gospel with all nations through his Spirit-empowered disciples. They are His witnesses “in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

The book of Acts shows us men and women finding deep joy in Jesus, in the true community of church, and sharing the story with the world around them. There is hardship. There is tension. There is uncertainty. But you will also see a movement; one that you are invited to take part in as you believe in Jesus.

For an overview of what’s happening in these chapters, check out The Bible Project’s videos: [What Happened at Pentecost and Why It’s Important \(Acts 1-7\)](#) and [The Apostle Paul \(Acts 8-12\)](#)



## Monday

[Read or listen to Acts 1 - 4](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

The book opens with the account of the resurrected Jesus ascending into heaven, telling His disciples and followers to wait in Jerusalem for the gift of God's own Holy Spirit who will indwell, empower, and lead them. How would you explain the effects of Jesus' resurrection to a non-believing friend?

As you read on, consider: how does the Holy Spirit help and gift believers? Have you ever sensed the Spirit's presence and leadership in your own life? How?

How does being filled with the Holy Spirit relate to bearing witness to Jesus?

The church was "born" 10 days after Jesus' Ascension, when the Holy Spirit came upon the believers at Pentecost. Peter's sermon is a summary of the Old Testament story – why was it important he shared this? What facts about Jesus are important for non-believers to understand (verses 29-33)?

This early church shared deep fellowship with God and one another (2:42-47). What are aspects of this passage that you hope to see more of in our church? Have you experienced any of these? How could you help The Well be more like 2:42-47 in 4:32-37?

## Tuesday

[Read or listen to Acts 5 - 8](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

The gospel spreads in these chapters outside of Jerusalem to “all Judea and Samaria”. So what does the account of Ananias and Sapphira have to do with the beginning of the church? Is there a time when you have also tried to “lie” to God, or pretend He does not already know the motive of your heart? What does it mean to “fear the Lord”.

Where do you see the apostles and early church successful in these chapters? Who is behind their momentum and methods? What does what happened at Pentecost have to do with it?

Stephen’s speech to the Sanhedrin is a masterful and Spirit-empowered review of the Old Testament. Why would this be important to early Christians? Why would it be important to a Christ-follower today?

Where do you see the apostles and early church struggle in these chapters? Are these struggles similar to any that you see in present-day churches in America? Around the world?

What does the story of the Ethiopian tell us about God's heart for those who don't know Him?

What about the story of the Ethiopian gives you hope for when you share the gospel or see a baptism? Who is the hero of this story? The Ethiopian? Philip? Or God?

### **Wednesday**

[Read or listen to Acts 9 - 12](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

While the early church was growing rapidly, Saul the Pharisee was trying to destroy it. But God had other plans for Saul (soon to be renamed Paul) and dramatically turns him around to work *for* the kingdom of God, not against it. Do you know any such stories like this – perhaps your own or someone you know?

What changes did people notice when you began following Jesus? How did they react?

Who has been a Barnabas to you? How? Have you ever served as a Barnabas to someone?

There's that phrase again: "living in the fear of the Lord" (9:31) – what does it mean here? To you?

Cornelius is described as "God-fearing"; would this description suit you?

Using the story of Peter at Cornelius' house, how would you respond to the question: "Can people who have never heard the gospel be saved?"

Why would it be significant for Peter and other Jewish believers to see that God's Holy Spirit had also been poured out on the Gentiles (non-Jews)? How does this affect the way you treat "unacceptable" people you meet? Who is the hero of this story?

What are you learning about God's heart to save human beings? How does the story of Cornelius and Peter show God's ability to direct events so that people hear the gospel?

### Thursday

[Read or listen to Acts 13 - 15](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

We see the Holy Spirit direct the church leaders at Antioch to set apart Barnabus and Paul for specific work. How do you think they arrived at hearing and following His leading? How does He still speak to believers today?

In chapter 13 we see Paul and Barnabus travel about 350 miles by land and sea. What does this show us about their willingness to travel so far for God's call on their life?

Paul in chapter 13 read in the worship service from the Old Testament; why do you think they did that in light of the gospel of Jesus? Why would it be important for Christians to still read the Old Testament? Paul also preaches a summary message of much of the Old Testament – what does this tell you about the gospel?

What misunderstandings, plots, and persecutions do you see Paul and Barnabus endure in chapter 14? How does this challenge you in sharing the gospel and how it might be received?

Is there some area of faith where you feel like Peter in chapter 15 – going back and forth because you are not sure of what is right? How could verse 15:11 relate to this concern?

### **Friday**

Read or listen to Romans 8 again.

Consider or journal

What was one of the biggest misunderstandings you had about Christianity before becoming a believer? What do you still have questions about? Who could you talk to to seek answers or further conversation?

In what ways do you see the Bible tell one story? What connections have you noticed so far?



*Meet with one another each week to share and pray about what you are experiencing and learning as you move through Foundations.*

Share why you think church is important to the life of a believer.

How did the Lord first get your attention? How did He lead you to this church?

With whom do you associate that likely no other minister or Christian talks with? Why do you think God has put you in their life?

What do you sense the Holy Spirit doing in your life right now?

If you had to emphasize one central truth about the gospel, what would it be?



## Week 6 || What can I do?

### What will you be looking at this week?

Paul's Letter to the Church at Ephesus shows us how – both theologically and practically – the gospel is for *all* of life. It shows God's calling on the life of believers and how we walk in that together.

The letter is finely balanced: the first half celebrates God's calling of salvation that we receive in Christ. Ephesians 1-3 explain the gospel.

The second half of the letter, 4-6, is about our walking in light of the difference the gospel makes. This is the transformed life. This is walking in what God intends for our relationships with Him, with one another, our work, our sexuality, our money, our families, and every aspect of our lives. Jesus is the foundation and motivation for all of life; we do not obey to earn God's blessings, we already have them in Christ.

God's calling. Our walking. That's the balance of this letter to the local church.

For an overview of this letter, check out The Bible Project's video: [Book of Ephesians Summary: A Complete Animated Overview](#)



## Monday

[Read or listen to Ephesians 1](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

Ephesians begins and ends with prayers of praise to God. What do you see Paul giving thanks for? Try making your prayers to God today focused with gratitude for what He has given you.

What is God's blessing on the life of a believer? What purpose does this blessing serve? Which ones impact you most as you read or listen to the opening of the letter?

How does someone know if they are "chosen" by God? How does the language of adoption in this letter impact your view of God and yourself before Him?

What are you doing in your life "that you may know him better" (verse 1:17)? What are the things Paul asks for? How would your spiritual walk – and those of your community – be affected if you asked for this each day?

Where do you need the “incomparably great power” (verse 1:19) of God to be at work in you this week? Pray and ask Him to do this work in you and through you.

## **Tuesday**

[Read or listen to Ephesians 2](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

Paul begins this part of the letter by dividing a Christian’s life into two parts: What are they? Who controlled you in the first period? What was the result?

What is the relationship, according to Ephesians, between God’s grace and good works?

Is there any good work that you sense God may have for you to do? What is it?

What in your own life is due only to God’s presence and wonder-working power?

## Wednesday

Read or listen to Ephesians 3 - 4

Consider or journal

Ephesians 3 & 4 are the fulcrum of the two halves of this letter: God's Calling, Our Walking. What does that have to do with the "mystery" that was made known to Paul as revealed in this passage?

What is Paul's view of the mission that God has given him (3:7-10)?

What benefit of being in Christ is taught in 3:12?

On a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), with how much freedom and confidence do you approach God?

Paul prays for the Ephesians starting in 3:14 — What is he asking God to do? What does it mean to have God's "Spirit in your inner being?"

What is God's purpose in giving gifts to His people?

According to chapter 4, what's the problem with trying to live a Christian life apart from the church? How does this say we need others?

### **Thursday**

[Read or listen to Ephesians 5](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

What are the standards Paul sets for Christian living in 5:1, 2, and 8?

This passage has some very blunt commands. Aside from avoiding "deeds of darkness" (5:11), what else are we supposed to do regarding the evil of the world? How does this impact your daily life and living?

From 5:18-21, what qualities should be exhibited in the Spirit-filled life?

If you are a believer in Christ, how would you compare the life that you lived before Christ to the life you live today? Where have you seen the greatest change (language, desires, values, relationships, etc.)?

Also from chapter 5, what other relationship is marriage symbolic of? In what ways?

What strikes you about the standard for husbands in 5:25 and 28? The standard set for wives? How does the current culture's view of "marriage" compare to this passage?

In your own words, how would you describe the goal of a Christian marriage?

## Friday

Read or listen to Ephesians 6

Consider or journal

How can parents bring up their children “in the training and instruction of the Lord”?

What do you consider to be the ideal employer/employee relationship? How does that compare with 6:5-9, a description of bondservants (employees) and masters (employers) in the early 1st Century.

Considering the passage describing the armor of God, where do you see the scheme's of God's enemy being played out in the world around you today?

What makes up the “armor of God?” Which parts are defensive weapons? Offensive?

If you had to compare how you feel when the enemy attacks to the armor in this passage, where do you feel most protected? Most vulnerable? What have you been struggling with lately? How can this passage and the believers God has put around you help?



*Meet with one another each week to share and pray about what you are experiencing and learning as you move through Foundations.*

Share together any sense you got of the good work that God may have for you to do. How can we support and pray for one another in this?

What does it mean to “speak the truth in love” (4:15)? How does that differ from just speaking the truth?

Ephesians 4 speaks to the need of each believer to participate in church. What are apprehensions you may have about church? What’s been your experience? What excites you about being part of this church? Where are you already serving in the church? Where would you like to serve?

As you look back over this journey through major chapters and books of the Bible, have you seen any changes in your motives and desires? The way you interact with and treat others?



## Week 7 || Where is all this headed?

### What will you be looking at this week?

Ever since sin entered the world, God began his rescue plan to redeem the world. You have read some major chapters in this story that the entire Bible is telling. Jesus has now come for us and for our salvation. Believers now wait for Him to return – and as we do our mission together is to be, and to make, disciples of Him.

One of Jesus' own disciples and friends, John, was exiled to a prison island because of his faith. It was here that he received a symbolic vision from God of the church and the risen Jesus Christ who is returning. Through seven messages in the opening chapters, we hear Christ's vision for how he wants His disciples to live and think and love. This is His vision for what a local church should care about and be committed to. These remain challenges we face even today.

In the closing chapters of this letter recounting John's vision, we see Jesus, the second Adam and true Israel, has reconciled us to God and to one another. And he will come again to set all things right and make all things new.

For more on the entire Revelation, check out The Bible Project's videos: [Book of Revelation Summary: A Complete Animated Overview, Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)



## Monday

Read or listen to Revelation 1

Consider or journal

What do the titles given to Jesus (1:5-6) tell you about us? What are three things that Christ does for us?

To believers suffering because of their faith, what aspect of the gospel would be especially impactful?

What pressures most challenge your walk with Jesus?

What are some truths about Jesus that keep you going?

What is significant about John's circumstances (1:9) and the day when he received this vision (1:10)?

Read or listen to verses 1:12-18 again; what do the images suggest about Jesus Christ? What does it suggest about your destiny with Him?

What does it mean for a church to be a light?

## **Tuesday**

[Read or listen to Revelation 2 and 3](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

These chapters describe several real churches at the time, starting with the Ephesian church. What are some good things mentioned about this church? What's changed since Paul wrote his letter to them? Why was repentance necessary for this church?

What do Jesus' words to the church in Smyrna teach about suffering?

In what ways do you feel spiritually rich? Where can we get a daily source of spiritual enrichment? Power?

How are the Christians in Pergamum being tested? Which do you think is harder to endure: persecution by enemies or seduction by the culture? Which do you face most often? What weapons has God given you to battle against these?

What dangers exist for Christians who rely on an image instead of nurturing a genuine spiritual life (3:2-3)? What is the only hope for the survival of the church in Sardis?

What open doors has Christ placed before you? How can your community help you be obedient to take the next steps in your walk with Him?

### **Wednesday**

[Read or listen to Revelation 19 - 20](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

There is much talk about the sounds of worship in this passage. How has your interest in worshipping God increased or decreased over the course of Foundations? Why is that?

What characterizes this scene of worship in heaven? Who participates in this praise?

What repeats in these five songs of heavenly praise? What does this say about God?

What about the horse, the rider and the setting of these closing chapters most captures your attention?

What mystery about Jesus Christ are you most looking forward to understanding in heaven?

What hopes and fears does this triumphant picture of Jesus bring out in you? Who do you say He is when faced with this picture and the assertion of 19:16?

## Thursday

Read or listen to Revelation 21 - 22

Consider or journal

What is the goal of all redemption? What do you think it will be like living without fear, pain, or death, and with the continual and direct presence of God?

Our bodies grow older. Things we build decay. Old habits die hard. How do you see these things in light of 21:5?

Considering the 1st Century world that John and the hearers of this letter lived, what would have been especially impressive about this city described in chapter 21? What stands out most to you? What does that mean for your own walk with God?

How has an interaction with the beginning and ending chapters of Revelation added to your view of God? Of the Bible? Of the completeness of salvation? How has it affected your faith or trust in Jesus Christ?

What words of Jesus Christ are repeated three times in the close of the letter (verses 22:7, 12, and 20)? How do these words sum up John's Revelation as well as where Christian believers currently find themselves? What about those who are not believers?

### **Friday**

[Read or listen to Romans 8 again.](#)

[Consider or journal](#)

How this chapter begin to sum up all that you have read, discussed, prayed, and experienced moving through Foundations?



*Meet with one another each week to share and pray about what you are experiencing and learning as you move through Foundations.*

You have been faithful to read the Bible every week for 7 weeks in a row!

Share together what the Lord has been doing in your life over the course of Foundations.

How has reading the Bible's story regularly helped you? Have you noticed anything different in your life?

You've covered major chapters and entire books of Scripture.

What have you learned most in reading Scripture? Was it easier or harder than you thought?

Where do you find yourself now with God?

No small feat.  
Congratulations!!

How do you know for certain that you will spend eternity with God when you die? Where does your assurance in that come from?

What is God asking you to do? What are you going to do about it? How can this community and church help?

Who do you say Jesus is?

Can you better share the gospel story now than before you began Foundations?

Are you ready to continue the spiritual journey and begin the second module of Foundations: Christian Practice?





## Appendix: Choosing a Bible Translation

—

**From Lifeway Christian Resources** :: The majority of Bible translations are categorized by their translation philosophy, either being more formal (word-for-word) or more dynamic (thought-for-thought) in translation. There are pros and cons to each of these. In a word-for-word translation, idioms and phrases commonly used in Greek and Hebrew may not translate well. Also, grammatical differences in languages and certain words may not have an exact English translation, making translating from Greek and Hebrew to English quite complex. In thought-for-thought translations, some words may be sacrificed to find a modern equivalent phrase that will make sense to a modern English speaker.

Translations we recommend using for Foundations:

### **New American Standard Bible (NASB)**

“The New American Standard Bible is the preeminent formal equivalence translation for today’s reader with accuracy you can trust. Originally produced in 1971 and updated in 1995, the NASB is widely embraced for its faithfulness to both the vocabulary and syntax of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek of the original sources.”

- Very literal language
- In-depth footnotes
- Due to literal word-for-word translation from Greek and Hebrew, some phrases don’t flow as smoothly in English as other translations.

### **English Standard Version (ESV)**

“The English Standard Version (ESV) is an essentially literal translation of the Bible in contemporary English. Created by a team of more than 100 leading evangelical scholars and pastors, the ESV Bible emphasizes ‘word-for-word’ accuracy, literary excellence, and depth of meaning.”

- Literal language
- Poetic phrasing
- Extensive footnotes and references to serve the reader in seeking clarity
- Built from the RSV, so much of the language is more traditional than modern

### **Christian Standard Bible (CSB)**

“The CSB was created using optimal equivalence, a translation philosophy that pursues both linguistic precision to the original languages and readability in contemporary English. We believe that you don’t have to choose between faithfulness to the original text and clarity. The CSB text has been proven to optimize both, making it ideal for preaching and study, and for sharing with others.”

- Highly readable
- Extensive footnotes and references to serve the reader in seeking clarity
- Includes notes and new findings from recently discovered manuscripts
- Right in between formal and dynamic language

- Gender-accurate language (Example: updating “man” to “humanity” in many areas and “brothers” to “brothers and sisters” in areas where the context intends both.)

### The Message (MSG)

The Message is a thought-for-thought work. It converts the original languages into the tone and rhythms of modern-day American speech while retaining the idioms and meaning of the original languages. This paraphrase was translated using the rhythms and tone of contemporary English to communicate to the modern reader.

- Easiest to read for teens and adults
- The stated goal of *The Message* was to make the original meaning more understandable and accessible to the modern reader.
- Eugene Peterson worked on *The Message* throughout the 1990s, translating the original Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic texts and paraphrasing them into contemporary American English
- Best for Christians who want a fresh Bible-reading experience and first-time readers

## Appendix: Summary Statements for Christian Belief

—

### The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic (universal) Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

—

### The Nicean Creed (Constantinople Version)

We believe in one God, the Father, Ruler of all, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And we believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from the Father before all time; Light, from Light, true God from true God; begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father, through Whom all things were made; Who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made a man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and rose on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He ascended to heaven, and sits at the right hand of the Father. He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead; His kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who is worshiped and glorified together with the Father and Son, and Who spoke through the Prophets.

And we believe that there is one holy, universal and apostolic church. We confess one baptism for the remission of sins, and we look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

—

## The Theological Beliefs of The Well Community Church

The Holy Bible is true, authoritative, and sufficient to lead every part of humanity, the Church, and the world toward eternal good. The Bible leads us to know God and how to love, worship, and serve Him. We hold that the Bible is inerrant in the original autographs without any mixture of error. (Psalm 19:7-11; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

There is only One true God, Creator of heaven and earth, who eternally exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Trinity is real! (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6; Isaiah 46:9-10; John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6; 1 Timothy 2:5; Genesis 1:26; Psalm 45:6-7; Psalm 110:1; Matthew 3:13-17; Matthew 28:17-20; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

All things (you, this world, everything) exist for the glory of God! We were created specifically for a relationship with God. (Psalm 148; Proverbs 16:4; Isaiah 61:3; Romans 11:33-36; 1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Ephesians 1:3-14). Adam and Eve enjoyed a perfect relationship with God in Eden until they chose to rebel (sin) against their Creator.

Because of Adam's sin, *all* humanity (Christ excluded) is now sinful even from birth (= our sin nature) which is demonstrated through personal, willful, & sinful actions (= our moral choices). (Genesis 6:5; Romans 5:12; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:23; 5:8, 12-21; 7:18; Ephesians 2:1-3). Our sin nature and willful sin choices separate us from perfect and holy God. This is bad news and it affects every human on the planet!

Because God is perfect, Holy, and righteous, God does not allow sinful humans into His perfect presence in heaven; the deserved penalty for our sin is physical and spiritual death. Sin is devastating to every part of humanity. Because of sin, our relationship with Holy God is irreparably broken. (Genesis 2:15-17; Genesis 3:19; Romans 5:12; 6:23; James 1:14-15).

But there is GOOD NEWS: God sent His sinless Son, Jesus, to the earth for us, to rescue us from our own sin and eternal death. Jesus Christ is GOD, the eternal Son of God, was miraculously born of a virgin (thus, not having an earthly father's seed or original sin), and is both *fully God* and *fully human*. (Matthew 1:20; Luke 2:52; John 1:1-4, 14; Colossians 1:15-20; Hebrews 1:1-3).

Not only did Jesus live a perfect, sinless life, Jesus Christ died on the cross as our sacrificial substitute to pay the penalty for *all* sin. Christ died for you! Christ's death made provision that all mankind could have salvation through a new spiritual relationship with Him based on faith and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord. (John 1:29; 10:1-18; Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18). You can ask Jesus into your life and believe that Jesus is God's Son who died for you and who was raised by God from death so that all who trust upon Jesus may have eternal life in Heaven with God.

Being perfect as both man and God, Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, reigns with His Father in heaven at present, and will one day physically return to earth to judge this world. (Matthew 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; John 1:20-21:25; 1 Corinthians 15:12-34; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Hebrews 9:28; 1 John 3:2; Revelation 1:7).

There will be a future physical resurrection of all the dead. Only those who turn from sin and to Jesus in faith and repentance will be raised to eternal reward (heaven). Those who do not turn from their sin and to Jesus will be raised to eternal punishment (hell). (Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15).

Only through faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, a faith which leads to true repentance from sin, can one be reconciled to God and experience *true* life both (in the here and now with truest joy) and in eternal life with Christ in heaven. (John 3:18, 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 1 Timothy 2:5-6).

God loves YOU and desires a relationship with you. Ask Jesus Christ (right now) to forgive you of your sin and accept His gift of forgiveness and new spiritual life. Only through a relationship with Jesus, can you ever know God fully or have eternity when you die on this earth. (John 3:16; John 14:6) God is ready & willing to forgive you and save you today!

—

## Further Statements of Our Christian Belief

[The 1689 Baptist Confession of Faith](#)

[Acts 29 Distinctives](#)

## Bibliography

---

Some of the books, authors, teachers, and words that most inspired and directly informed Foundations for Christian Belief.

*Discovering the Gospel in Every Book of the Bible – A Tim Keller Series*, Gospel in Life.

*Recovering Redemption* by Matt Chandler & Michael Snetzer, B&H Publishers.

*Steps: A Gospel-Centered Recovery* by Matt Chandler & Michael Snetzer, Lifeway.

*The Serendipity Groups Bible* by Serendipity House and Zondervan Publishers.

*The Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*, Crossway.

*The Invitation* by Eugene Peterson, NavPress.

*Do You Believe?* By Paul David Tripp, Crossway.

*Unfolding Grace*, Crossway.

