

Discipleship #2: Establish



WHY: FOUNDATIONS FIRST

Before we can progress toward spiritual maturity, we must first establish spiritual foundations.

Hebrews 6:1-2

Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

- Foundations are the core principles your life is built upon.
- The higher you want your life to go, the deeper you have to build your foundations.
- The challenges of life reveal how strong your foundations are. (Proverbs 10:25)
- There following are three important truths about foundations.
 - Jesus is the only foundation. (I Corinthians 3:11)
 - Obedience establishes foundations. (Matthew 7:24-25)
 - Repentance is foundational. (II Timothy 2:19)

HOW: ESTABLISH SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS

Establish: “To found, institute, build or bring into being on a firm or stable basis.”¹

¹ Dictionary.com

1. Foundation #1: Salvation

- Lordship – confessing Jesus as Lord implies a submission to His Lordship in every area of life. There is no option of receiving Him as Savior and not as Lord (Romans 10:9; Luke 6:46; Matthew 7:21; Acts 2:36).
- Repentance – both a one-time decision and an ongoing lifestyle of turning *from* sin and turning *to* Jesus (Acts 2:38-39, 41).
- Faith – placing one's trust fully in the completed work of the cross. Through faith we acknowledge our desperate need for a Savior and that we can do nothing to earn salvation on our own.

FOLLOWING JESUS AS LORD

a) We follow Jesus as Lord through self-denial.

- Self-denial requires putting Jesus before reputation and comfort. (II Corinthians 6:4-10; Hebrews 11:24-25)
- Self-denial requires putting Jesus before career and family. (Matthew 4:21-22)
- Self-denial requires putting Jesus before personal ideas. (II Corinthians 10:5)

b) We follow Jesus as Lord through sacrifice.

- Sacrifice is required to glorify God. (II Timothy 3:12)
- Sacrifice is required to love others. (II Corinthians 4:10-12)
- Sacrifice is required to crucify the flesh. (Philippians 3:18-19)

c) We follow Jesus as Lord through surrender.

- Surrender is manifest in heart devotion. (I Peter 3:15)
- Surrender is manifest in practical obedience. (Luke 6:46)
- Surrender is manifest in a continuous lifestyle. (Colossians 2:6)

For Discussion: Can you point to the time when you made the decision to surrender your life to Jesus as Lord? Tell your neighbor about when you made that decision to surrender to Jesus as Lord of your life.

2. Foundation #2: Water Baptism

Note: Please refer to chapter 3 in the Purple Book for a more in depth look at water baptism.

- Water baptism is the first act of obedience and the pattern for how we follow Jesus – dying to sin and living by faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 6:4; Acts 2:38, 41)
- Our desire should be to impart to new Christians the need to obey God willingly in everything He commands in His Word. Obedience is a part of Lordship. (John 14:15; Matthew 10:38; Luke 6:46)
- God commands every Christian to be water baptized; therefore, water baptism is a sign of obedience to Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16)
- When explaining water baptism to a new believer, be sure and ask them if they understand the necessity of water baptism.
- Have them explain to you what will happen, according to scripture, when they get baptized.
- By hearing what they say, you can discern whether or not they understand water baptism. Then help them take the steps to schedule their baptism at church.

For Discussion:

- Have you personally been water baptized with the understanding that water baptism is a public confession of your repentance from dead works and faith in Christ alone for salvation?
- Have you ever explained water baptism to someone?

3. Foundation #3: Holy Spirit Baptism

Note: Please refer to chapter 4 in the Purple Book for a more in depth look at Holy Spirit baptism.

It is critical that as believers we understand, but also help others understand, who the Holy Spirit is before attempting to explain the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit is God, a member of the Trinity.
- The Holy Spirit is a real person, not a vapor or a cloud.
- The Holy Spirit is called the Helper and the Spirit of Truth. (John 14:26; John 16:13)
- They Holy Spirit is a good gift given by God the Father to those of His children that ask. (Luke 11:13)

When explaining the baptism in the Holy Spirit to a new believer, it is important to take them through the Word because the Word is Truth and the Word builds our faith. (Psalm 119:160; Romans 10:17)

4. Foundation #4: The Word

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

- Believers are established in the Word by hearing the preached Word of God. (Luke 8:15)
- Believers are established in the Word by interacting with God through His Word daily. (Job 23:12; Joshua 1:8; Acts 17:11)
- Help new believers establish the discipline of reading the Bible every day. Encourage them to set a realistic goal and be faithful.
 - Memorizing Scripture – committing Scripture to memory is a powerful way to become established in the Word.
 - Bible Reading Plan – there are a variety of Bible reading plans available that can help one pick an area of focus (reading the Bible in a year, topical studies, etc.).
- Have them pray Scripture over themselves as they begin to read the Word.
 - Ephesians 1:17 – they can pray that as they are reading they will desire to know God better.
 - Psalm 119:18 – they can pray that as they are reading God would open their eyes to understand the Word.
 - I John 2:27 – they can ask the Holy Spirit to teach them truth through the Word of God.

- Explain what some of the objectives of reading the Bible are:
 - To know God — who He is: His thoughts and His will for mankind. (John 17:3)
 - To have our minds be renewed. (Romans 12:1-2)
 - To discover God’s will for our lives and for His people. (Hebrews 5:14)
 - To build up our faith as faith comes by hearing the Word of God. (Romans 10:17)
 - To show us where we need to change. (Hebrews 4:12)
 - To help us live a holy life. (Psalm 119:11)

- Believers are established in the Word by understanding how to read the Scriptures. The following are a few tools to help them do so:
 - Use a good study Bible.
 - *Recommended: ESV Study Bible*
 - *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* and/or *How to Read the Bible Book by Book* by Gordon D. Fee.
 - Meditate (to ponder, to reflect, to consider, to dwell in thought) on the Word.

- Believers are established in the Word as they confess the Word over their lives and the lives of others.
 - There’s power in confessing God’s Word. Give them confession sheets, helping them personalize God’s promises to them.

- Believers are established in the Word when they obey the Word. (James 1:22; Matthew 28:19-20)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you received the baptism in the Holy Spirit by faith? If not, whom can you pray with this week to receive this good gift from God that will empower you in your life and ministry?
2. Do you have a daily habit of reading the Bible? If you do, what do you enjoy most about reading God’s word? If you do not, what can you do to grow in and strengthen this habit?
3. Which of the foundations discussed in this lesson are you the weakest in ministering to new believers? What action step can you take this

week to strengthen your knowledge and ability to minister and impart this foundation to those in your life who need it?

HOMEWORK

1. Write a *brief* paragraph for each of the following acts of obedience in the life of a believer (summarizing the importance of each):
 - Repentance from dead works and faith in Christ alone for salvation.
 - Obedience to be water baptized.
 - Receiving the gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
 - The importance of reading and knowing God through the Bible.
2. Please refer to the SOAP Method Handout provided. Take Acts 1:8 and apply the SOAP Method to this verse.