

# ***“Foundations”***

## **The Basics of Discipleship**

### ***The Background and Origin of these Discipleship Resources***

These materials have been compiled over 20 years of raising a family, in local church ministries, and have been primarily developed through an active and systematic discipling of many individuals in one-on-one mentoring relationships.

The materials were never compiled for, nor originally intended to be used in any formal, discipleship “course,” but have been brought together and **developed to teach and equip** those whom we have been personally discipling.

Therefore, we believe that these resources and “tools” are most effectively used in such a one-to-one discipleship context.

2 Timothy 2:2 – *“And the things that you have heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*

### ***The Vision and Scope***

Although the materials provided have been used for over 16 years in a one Saturday a month, church-based school of discipleship in Scotland\*, they have been only meant to provide a **very basic introduction** to the vision and core foundations of personal evangelism and disciple-making. They are used to stimulate, facilitate and supplement personal discipleship relationships within a local church ministry – “Each One REACHING One and Each One TEACHING One!”

\* (A sample or typical syllabus (plan & contents) of this School of Discipleship is provided or is available on request)

**To make disciples one must BE a disciple!** These resources therefore are designed to motivate and equip believers to “BE” true disciples, as well as to

provide some basic tips and “tools” for effectively making disciples - REACHING and TEACHING others. The diagram *“My Life as a Disciple”* and its introductory page give the **“big picture” or overview and plan** for the basics of discipleship as found in these materials.

It should be understood that these resources are therefore NOT at all comprehensive or complete, and are really “a work in progress” – as we continue to disciple others and seek to search the Word and develop additional “tools,” materials, and visuals for ministry to individuals. If you would like to receive occasional updates and further discipling helps request them at [ThomCunningham@aol.com](mailto:ThomCunningham@aol.com)

### ***The Use of Scripture***

It will be immediately evident that these materials are primarily made up of extensive scripture lists under the various topics and themes of discipleship. This reflects the character of our “philosophy” of discipling – to impart simply what the Bible teaches about important areas of theology and practical Christian living and ministry. This is intended, and is designed to encourage those being mentored to dig into the Word of God for themselves, to gather God’s wisdom or viewpoint on every area of life and godliness.

Psalm 119:130 – *“The entrance of Your words give light; it gives understanding to the simple.”*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 – *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine (teaching), for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”*

John 8:31 – *“If you continue in my word, then are you my disciples indeed;”*

---

## *The Purpose of the Contents*

---

The “Foundations” discipleship resource materials include the following elements:

### 1) The Diagram “*My Life as a Disciple*” – Illustrating the Most Important Basics of the Christian Life and Discipleship

---

--- This is a basic overview of the scope of all the materials, covering what we believe are the most essential and core foundations and aspects of the Christian life. It is meant to be only a basis or framework upon which to add many other practical aspects of discipleship and Bible teaching.

--- The life of a disciple is here illustrated as a simple “building” or structure, because the Scriptures describe the life of believer as a “house,” a “temple” or a “building” built on solid foundations.

1 Corinthians 3:9 – “...for we are laborers together with God: you are God's husbandry (field), you are **God's building.**” --- Hebrews 3:6 – “...Christ as a son over his own house; **whose house we are...**”

### 2) The “*Each One REACH One – Each One TEACH One*” Seminar Power Point Presentations – Challenging and Equipping Believers for Personal Evangelism and Discipling

---

--- These 10 sessions (5 sessions – shorter version) have been taught in many churches and various countries as a training seminar to introduce and motivate believers to effective personal work.

--- Only the first two sessions are used in the first Saturday of our monthly school of discipleship. The rest of the material is used in part in introducing the sessions of our school of discipleship each month, and another full session of this seminar is covered under Section 9 – “*The Pillar of Witness.*”

--- In a one-to-one discipling relationship the truths and principles included in these presentations are studied and applied in greater detail over several weeks.

Matthew 28:19-20 – “...Go therefore, and teach (**make disciples of**) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: **Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...**”

John 15:8 – “In this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit: so shall you be my disciples.”

### 3) The “*Wisdom Journal*” – Keeping a Life Notebook of Study in the Word of God

---

--- A disciple is a “learner,” and must always remain a learner, regularly and continually gathering insights and God’s wisdom, and making wise choices accordingly. “Learners” will naturally make other learners!

--- This Life Notebook is a “tool” to help you and the one(s) you are discipling in becoming more faithful as “learners” – taking careful note of and compiling the things God is teaching you both from His Word.

Hebrews 2:1 – “...Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.” (KJV)

### 4) *Inductive Bible Study* – Learning the Joy of Discovering God’s Truth through Personally Searching the Scriptures

---

--- Serious disciples or “learners” must also learn the joy of discovery – digging for themselves into the depths of the Scriptures, to search out and discover truth through a life-long personal study of the Word.

--- “Foundations” provides an introduction to the analytical Bible study method using Observation, Correlation, Interpretation and Application.

--- The complete book of **Ephesians** is studied inductively, one-on-one, or in small group workshops, examining what the text says, considering context and parallel passages, historical background and meaning of the passage, and how the truths of the passage apply to the disciple’s personal life.

2 Timothy 2:15 – “Study (be diligent) to show yourself approved unto God, **a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (correctly handling) the word of truth.**”

### 5) “*Essential Foundations*” – Grasping an Overview and Standing Firmly upon the Foundational Truths of the Word of God

---

--- A solid foundation is essential for understanding the Gospel and for healthy growth in every aspect of the Christian life. God wants us to be “rooted and built up in Him, established in the faith.”

--- Running throughout Scripture are the underlying foundational truths revealing to us GOD - His greatness and glory, His ultimate will and purposes for history; we understand who MAN is apart from

God; the character and designs of the enemy of God – SATAN; and we see the story of God’s glory clearly

unfolding to reveal who JESUS CHRIST is and why He had to come and why He had die.

--- The panoramic narrative of the Bible is studied using the chronological approach as presented in “Firm Foundations - Creation to Christ” (Trevor McIllwain – NTM) or using “The Stranger on the Road to Emmaus” (John Cross – GoodSeed International) – [See and obtain these “tools” at [www.ntm.org](http://www.ntm.org) and [www.goodseed.com](http://www.goodseed.com) ]

--- Such a study is essential for gaining clear insight into “God’s Story” - the “big picture” of Scripture and to lay a solid foundation for a clear and vital understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

--- Key passages teaching these foundational themes of Scripture are also compiled in the same “Wisdom Journal” format to provide life-long compilation and study of these truths for the disciple – comparing Scripture with Scripture.

Colossians 2:7 – “...rooted and **built up in Him**, and **established in the faith**, as you have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.”

## 6) My Life “in Christ” – Understanding and Practicing my “Position” in Christ

---

--- In addition to knowing, believing and standing firmly upon the **Essential Foundations** of the faith, my growth in grace as a believer is dependent upon my knowledge and exercise of the glorious position or standing I am given by God the very moment I am saved.

--- The Apostle Paul in Ephesians chapters 1 – 3 clearly outlines the believer’s glorious new position, or standing that God has given each of us “in Christ.” In chapters 4 - 6, as well as throughout other New Testament letters, believers are taught to “practice” their positions – to obediently yield to God and to become in practice what He has already made them in “position.”

--- I must “live out” just who I really am “in Christ.” Who I **AM** is the very basis, motivation, purpose and power for what God wants to **DO** through me in Christ!

2 Corinthians 5:17 – “Therefore if any man **be in Christ**, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Ephesians 1:3 – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places **in Christ**...”

## 7) Christ’s Life in Me – Realizing the Awesome Reality of Christ’s Indwelling, and Appropriating ALL that HE is in Me

---

--- Christ *died* FOR me = Salvation & Redemption; Christ *lives* IN me = Sanctification & Growth;  
 --- To really grow in Christ, I must realize that the very moment I trusted Christ, God through the Holy Spirit took up real personal residence in me. The very essence of the Christian life is allowing Christ to live His life in and through me!

--- Just as I realized that I could do nothing to save myself, and reached out to trust in Christ’s sacrificial DEATH to save me – so, I also must realize that I myself cannot live the Christian life, and in turn appropriate the LIFE of the indwelling Christ in me. Then, His life, and all that He is, will be manifest in me.

Galatians 2:20 – “*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*”

## 8) Making Regular “Spiritual Evaluations” and Setting Spiritual Goals

---

--- Just as regular physical check-ups or examinations by a doctor are very important, we should be even more concerned about our “spiritual health.” We should also have regular “spiritual examinations!”  
 --- God tells us to “consider our ways” before Him with an open heart. As we check our attitudes, our walk with God, and our relationship with others, He will convict us and show us things which must be made right.

--- The “Setting Personal Goals” materials are provided for the serious disciple to work through and cooperate with God, to solve problems, to meet particular needs, or to reach specific spiritual goals.

Lamentations 3:40-42 – “*Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in heaven, and say: We have sinned and rebelled...*”

Psalms 139: 23-24 - “*Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me...*”

## 9) Obediently Allowing God to do “Christ’s Work Through Me” through The Four Pillars of the Christian Life

---

--- Flowing out of an appropriation of the realities of “My Life in Christ” and “Christ’s Life in Me”

should naturally be a life of victorious and fruitful service.

--- As I obediently live and walk by the leading of the Holy Spirit in me, God will be able to do “**Christ’s Work Through Me**,” as I exercise the spiritual basics – “**The Four Pillars of the Christian Life**.”

--- As God desires to work in and through me to glorify Himself, my part is simply to remain faithful...

- **Faithful in THE WORD OF GOD** – through studying the Word, memorizing the Word, meditating in the Word, applying the Word, etc.
- **Faithful in PRAYER** – through expressing my praise and utter dependence on God for everything.
- **Faithful in FELLOWSHIP** – in the context of a local assembly of believers “building up one another” in Christ.
- **Faithful in WITNESS** – to share the Gospel with unbelievers, and faithful in discipling new believers in the faith.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2 - *“Let a man so account of us (regard us), as of the ministers (servants) of Christ, and stewards of (or entrusted with) the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”*

## 10) “The Spiritual Life Cycle” – Reviewing the Vital Functions Necessary to a Life Which Truly Glorifies God

---

--- Just as physical life is made up of various cycles, there is also a vital “**Spiritual Life Cycle**” which must function in the individual life of a Christian, as well as in the corporate life of a local church.

--- A victorious and fruitful Christian life requires a continued and sustained cycle of “**KNOWING, GROWING, GOING and SOWING!**”

--- If we don’t **KNOW** the Lord (and continue to learn to know Him), we won’t **GROW** in Christ! If we don’t **GROW** in the Lord, we won’t really get **GOING** in our Christian life (to bear spiritual fruit), nor will we be **SOWING** the Word that others in turn might come to **KNOW** Him as well (and go on to grow, go and sow!)

1 John 2:3-6 - *“And by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that says, I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But who ever keeps His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: by this we know that we are in Him; He that says he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.”*

---

Finally, a few...

## **Important Teaching Principles**

In using these resources, it is essential to recognize that each element of this “**My Life as a Disciple**” structure is built upon the previous element. And it is so very important to teach each element in its order,

and to regularly and continually demonstrate how each part rests upon the previously laid foundational truth, and all to be resting firmly upon the “**Essential Foundations**” found in the Word of God.

Experience in using this material has shown the importance of viewing each of the basic elements as a strategic part of the “big picture” of discipleship.

Repetition and reinforcement of truth, of course, are also indispensable and scriptural:

2 Peter 1:12 - *“...Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though you know them, and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think its fitting, as long as I am in this tabernacle (my body), to stir you up by putting you in remembrance...”*

Titus 3:8 - *“...This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that you affirm constantly, (continually reaffirm!) that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men....”*

Throughout the teaching of this material, it is vitally important to emphasize and affirm that God’s glory is the driving purpose of each element, and of every aspect of “being” a disciple and in making disciples of others. And it is for God’s glory alone that these resources are being provided. May God richly bless and multiply their use to lift up and magnify His wonderful Name!

Thom & Carolyn Cunningham