



“Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.”

Luke 6:47-48 NKJV

Biblical Foundations Course

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The New Testament Church

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**The New Testament Church
Foundations Bible Study
Updated March, 2022
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**Using the book *Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation*, by Bob and Rose Weiner
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The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson One – Knowing God and His Word
(Study 1, 7-8 in *Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation*)

I Knowing God

- A. 2nd Peter 1:1-4 - Those who have surrendered to Christ as Savior and Lord...
 - 1. Have been given grace and peace in Jesus Christ
 - 2. His divine power has come to reside within us
 - 3. He has given us precious promises – we are partakers of His divine nature
- B. 2nd Peter 1:5-7
 - 1. When we are born again, we have faith (confidence that God has done what we've asked)
 - 2. We are to add *virtue* to that faith
 - a. Virtue is the moral excellence of God – or His attributes
 - b. Knowing that God dwells within us is critical...
 - 3. The more we know about God – knowledge – it enhances our walk with God
 - 4. But knowledge is never to replace knowing Him – for the other attributes mentioned such as self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love are character qualities

II Knowing His Word

- A. The condition of Scripture
 - 1. Psalm 19:7-10 – His law (word) is inspired in its original languages
 - a. The word heals, delivers, feeds and restores
 - b. The written word is our standard in every area of life
 - 2. 2nd Timothy 3:16 – All Scripture is given by inspiration of God
 - 3. 2nd Peter 1:16-21
 - a. Those who wrote the Bible did so “being moved by the Holy Spirit”
 - b. Even the mountain of transfiguration experience – hearing God’s voice...
 - c. Is not as certain as the written Word of God!
- B. The condition of the Reader
 - 1. Due to the fall of man in sin, no one is a perfect reader of Scripture – Genesis 3:1-6
 - a. Lust of the flesh – body doesn’t work perfectly, and our behavior is sinful - unrighteousness
 - b. Lust of the eyes – the soul is lifted up in vanity – self-righteousness
 - c. Pride of life – religion – we now operate in self-exaltation
 - 2. 2nd Peter 3:16-17 – our sin nature can cause us to “twist” the original meaning of Scripture
 - a. There is no private interpretation – we can’t make up what it means
 - b. We must learn to understand it in its original context – what it meant when written

III Growing in our walk with God

- A. The Cross – Matthew 16:24; Ephesians 2:16; Colossians 1:20
 - 1. Jesus’ death on the cross is a one-time sacrifice for all of time
 - 2. However, learning to die to self and live for God is a lifetime process!
- B. Meditation – Psalm 1; 39:3; John 17:3; Philippians 3:10
 - 1. We are to separate out distractions – read Scripture
 - 2. We ponder and roll over what we read – one verse – we will learn His voice
 - 3. The process of meditation helps us to discern His voice and know His will

The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson Two – Repentance and Water Baptism
(Study 2-3 in *Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation*)

I Acts 2:37-38 – Peter’s sermon to the disciples on the day of Pentecost

- A. By declaring who Jesus is, and his death and resurrection...
 - 1. *Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart...*
 - a. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts someone to reconsider what they had believed
 - b. They were to repent, then be water baptized, and receive the gift of the Spirit
 - 2. The word “repent” means, according to *Vine’s Expository Dictionary* – “to perceive afterwards” (*meta*, “after,” implying “change,” *noeo*, “to perceive;” *nous*, “the mind, the seat of moral reflection”), in contrast to *pronoeo*, “to perceive beforehand,” hence signifies “to change one’s mind or purpose”
 - 3. Everyone must repent of sin - definition is “the transgression of the law” – 1st John 3:4
 - a. Outward sin is defined by breaking one of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20)
 - b. Inward sin is an attitude of elevating self – Galatians 5:19-20
- B. Repentance would involve forsaking sin (laying the axe to the root of self) – Luke 14:33
 - 1. Forsaking sin is surrendering all to Christ as Lord
 - 2. This means surrendering our spirit (priorities), soul (mind) and body (now for God)

II Matthew 28:19 - Water Baptism – a sign of the Covenant

- A. Note that if one is saved or born again, they should get water baptized, but if one is not baptized it does not mean they go to hell... allows for all kinds of conversions when baptism is not possible
- B. Circumcision of the New Testament is the continuation of the Covenant
 - 1. Colossians 2:11-12 indicates that there is a spiritual circumcision of the heart
 - 2. Romans 2:29 also affirms that this is true – an inward circumcision
- C. Water baptism is a picture of the key ingredients in spiritual conversion (Ro. 6:1-6)
 - 1. Death – we must first die before we are buried – this is death to self
 - a. We have believers state a confession of their faith and testimony
 - b. This is an indication that God has regenerated them and is in covenant with them
 - 2. Burial – this is when Jesus went into the earth, but we forsake our sin
 - a. We let go of all of our past – sins and sin
 - b. We ask Christ to nail to the cross symbolically what we have done wrong
 - 3. Resurrection – when Jesus rose from the dead
 - a. We are born again into newness of life – resurrection life
 - b. We are given the strength to live the Christian life
 - 4. Why do we baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
 - a. Colossians 2:9 states that in Christ is the fullness of the Godhead (Trinity)
 - b. The Trinity is the manifestation of the true God – one God – three distinct persons

The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson Three – Baptism in the Holy Spirit
(Study 4-6 in *Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation*)

I Acts 2:37-38 – the gift of the Holy Spirit

- A. *What shall we do?* – v. 37
 - 1. Repent – to change one’s mind by the power of God
 - 2. Be baptized – to be immersed as a sign of what has already taken place
 - 3. *And you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*
- B. The “gift” of the Holy Spirit
 - 1. John 20:19-23 – Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit to the disciples
 - 2. *Yet*, Jesus appears to them in Luke 24:48-49 encouraging them to wait for power on high
 - a. You have the Holy Spirit within your spirit at the new birth
 - b. Yet, we all need the *power* of the Spirit in order to be witnesses (martyrs)
 - c. This power is like a river flowing out from us (John 7:37-39) – a release
 - d. Both the new birth and the baptism in the Spirit are the “gifts” we are given
- C. In the Old Testament, there are patterns of these two steps as well
 - 1. The feasts of Israel – Passover and Pentecost (see message of March 7, 2021)
 - 2. The blood (redemption) and the oil (power) – Leviticus 14
 - 3. The sea (redemption) and the cloud (power) – 1st Corinthians 10:1-2

II Matthew 3:11-12 – Baptism in the Spirit defined

- A. To “baptize” means “to dip” or immerse
 - 1. Jesus baptizes believers into the Holy Spirit
 - 2. The pattern of believers being baptized by the Spirit often indicates tongues
 - a. Matthew 1:18-23; 3:13-17 – Jesus conceived in Spirit, yet baptized
 - b. Acts 2:4 – Jerusalem, the initial Pentecost fulfillment
 - c. Acts 8:12-17 (Samaria); Acts 9:3-6 (Saul/Paul); Acts 10:43-45 (Cornelius)
 - d. Acts 18:24; 19:6 – Ephesian believers
- B. Speaking in Tongues
 - 1. The *prayer language* of tongues can be released in this baptism
 - 2. We speak but the Spirit gives utterance (or words) – Acts 2:4 – cooperation
 - 3. There are several benefits to praying “in the spirit”
 - a. It is a prayer language – 1st Cor. 14:2,14
 - b. It edifies our faith – 1st Cor. 14:4
 - c. It blesses you – 1st Cor. 14:16
 - d. It helps you give thanks well – 1st Cor. 14:17
 - e. It is spiritual warfare in the Spirit (or air) – 1st Cor. 14:12ff

III 1st Corinthians 12:4-6; 8-10 – the Gifts of the Spirit

- A. Ministries (built on character; v. 4-6) are distinct from gifts (given by grace; v. 8-10)
- B. These gifts are Word of wisdom and knowledge – a “word” about someone or thing; what to do with it; Faith, gifts of healing and miracles – “confidence” to pray for “healing gifts” for those ill; Prophecy – speaking forth some part of the Word of God for comfort, edifying, comfort; discerning of spirits (for deliverance), various kinds of tongues / interpretation (prophecy)

See the following resources as well: *March 7, 2021, message; Position Paper on Tongues (1988); July 8-September 23, 2012 (messages on the gifts of the Spirit)*

The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson Four – Prayer, Praise and Following God’s Will
(Study 10 and 27 in *Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation*)

I The Pattern of our Prayer Life

- A. The place of prayer in our lives – Matthew 21:12-16
 - 1. Our personal temples, and the corporate temple the church, are to be houses of prayer
 - 2. Prayer makes us accessible to hear God – the outcast, miracles, hope
 - 3. Prayer is also a place for praise – setting an atmosphere of worship
- B. God’s pattern for our Prayer Life – Matthew 6:5-13
 - 1. Get alone in our closet
 - 2. Do not pray with merely vain (empty) repetition; but
 - 3. Pray according to this pattern (or repeating with meaning)
 - a. Rehearse who He is – *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name*
 - b. Pray for His will on earth – *Thy Kingdom (government) come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven* – we are praying for some of heaven to come to earth – our earth
 - c. Pray for our needs, relationships, and liberty – *Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one, for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*
- C. Answers to prayer come in His time, by faith – and not by sight

II The Pattern of our Praise Life

- A. The Old Testament Tabernacle (Psalm 100:4; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16)
 - 1. The outer court represents salvation and Passover, our first step in praise – *thanksgiving*
 - a. *Come into His gates with thanksgiving* (praising God for His wonderful *acts*)
 - b. It is good to have psalms as a foundation for worship – Scriptures set to music
 - 2. The inner court represents the baptism in the Holy Spirit and Pentecost – *praise, celebration*
 - a. *Enter into His courts with praise* (praising God for His *ways* working things out for good)
 - b. It is also good to have hymns as an ingredient in worship – teaching doctrine
 - 3. The holy place represents the manifestation of the Kingdom of God – *worship*
 - a. *Bless His Name* (we worship God for Who He is, rehearsing His attributes)
 - b. We include spiritual songs – or songs of testimonies of how God works through us
- B. The Tabernacle of David (Acts 15:16-18)
 - 1. God is prophetically rebuilding the Tabernacle of David (only the Holy Place) in His church
 - 2. Mt. Zion – where the holy place was – is a symbol of the Kingdom of God – in His Church
 - 3. Praise and worship took place 24 hours a day in three shifts!
 - 4. The world ought to see that in His Church we praise God regardless of the situation

III God’s Will and Ours

- A. God’s Sovereign Will – His ultimate plan will come to pass regardless of our choices
 - 1. God’s will is with a capital W – it ought to be our desire to fulfill His Will
 - 2. However, God chooses to use our will (small letter) and choices – working it out for good
- B. Our will – God has given us rational choice
 - 1. He desires us to freely choose Him and His ways, as well as unwise detours
 - 2. He knows all things – He knows what we would have done if we didn’t do what we did!
- C. Though God doesn’t wait on our will, and knows it ahead of time – He works with it as well

The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson Five – Healing and Deliverance
(Study 11-12 in *Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation*)

I The preaching of the gospel will have “signs following”

- A. Signs follow those that believe – *we should not be following signs* – Mark 16:15-20
 - 1. Cast out devils – demon spirits can enter the mind of individuals
 - 2. Speak in tongues – release of the Holy Spirit’s prayer language
 - 3. Divine protection – most often when we do not realize it
 - 4. Healing – sicknesses cured supernaturally (not always instantly)
- B. Healing and deliverance are in the Atonement (provision from Christ’s death and resurrection)
 - 1. Healing is needed because of sin – the origin of sickness
 - a. 1st Peter 2:24 (Isaiah 53:4-5) – healing – inner from sin; outer from physical
 - b. John 9:1-3 – not every sickness or infirmity is caused by personal sin
 - 2. Deliverance is needed because of the enemy – Lucifer’s fall and his host of demons
 - a. 1st John 3:8 – Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil – inner mind and outer as well
 - b. Mt. 12:43ff - demons inhabit “rooms” - confession of sin cleans it out – kept from returning
- C. The Kingdom of God is at hand – Matthew 10:1-8
 - 1. Heal the sick – we serve those who are suffering
 - 2. Cleanse the lepers – we include the outcast
 - 3. Raise the dead – we pray for miracles to bring attention to the gospel
 - 4. Cast out devils – we command spirits to leave – not by reason or negotiation

II Healing

- A. Gifts of healing are in operation today – 1st Corinthians 12:4-11
- B. We pray for the person (who is enduring sickness); but command the sickness to go by faith
- C. Our focus should be on what God is doing and when healing does not occur, we must discern
 - 1. God uses sickness to awaken an individual to unconfessed sin or an area to be surrendered
 - 2. God uses our inability to minister purely since we are not perfect like Jesus
 - 3. God’s sovereignty involves trusting in His timing – Jesus did *not* heal everyone
 - 4. There are times when spiritual warfare is also involved and must accompany healing

III Deliverance

- A. How are we made in the image of God? (1st Thessalonians 5:23)
 - 1. Our spirit – intuition (thoughts), conscience (priorities), and communion (fellowship)
 - 2. Our soul – mind, will and emotions
 - 3. Our body – taste, touch, hearing, smell, touch
- B. Our biggest problem is our sin nature – sin is the open door to demonic bondage
 - 1. Eph. 2:1 - An unbeliever’s spirit is dead in sin – a believer’s is alive and cannot be possessed
 - 2. Eph. 4:27 - One’s soul can be inhabited - patterns of thinking, will made captive, emotions rule
 - 3. Lk. 13:10-17 - Bodies through natural weakness can be prone to come under enhanced bondage
- C. The progression of the Gospel
 - 1. Jesus cast out demons, but the disciples were not always able to do so...
 - 2. Believers today have the Holy Spirit within and can discern the presence of evil spirits
 - 3. An individual who may have demonic bondage enhancing the power of sin needs to grow in their faith and belief so they can displace demonic bondage with obedience – *they participate*
 - 4. 2nd Timothy 2:25-26 – spiritual growth can often bring release from demonic oppression

The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson Six – Developing Christian Character
(Study 13-14 in *Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation*)

I The ultimate goal of Christianity – *transformed into His image (character)*

- A. Jesus first three major teachings
 - 1. John 3 – *you must be born again* (Nicodemus)
 - 2. John 4 – *worshipping God is done in spirit and truth* (Woman at the Well)
 - 3. Matthew 5-7 – *Sermon on the Mount* (putting on the character of Christ)
 - a. Beatitudes – the attitudes of the believer toward God and the culture
 - b. Similitudes – the actions of the believer as salt (preserve) and light (expose)
 - c. Fulfilling the Law – now written “on the heart” of the believer
- B. Transformed into His image
 - 1. Romans 8:28-30 – God’s ultimate goal...
 - a. Working all things out for good to those who love God and His purpose
 - b. He foreknew, predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son
 - c. We might be the firstborn among many – manifesting Christ
 - 2. Romans 5:1-5 – the process of being confirmed to His image
 - a. Receive God’s grace – not acceptance by works
 - b. Tribulation, trials, and conflicts are allowed upon us – pressures
 - c. Faith and trust in God *in the midst of conflict* develops our character
 - 1. Pressure reveals where we are in our character development
 - 2. It gives us the opportunity to surrender to Him and deepen our trust
 - d. The experience of victory in the midst of trial is a great testimony to others
 - e. It gives us hope that we can do it again when needed...
- C. God always works on our character (His image) – cutting away what is not of Him
 - 1. Our spirit (heart) – where God’s image is stamped in full at our conversion
 - 2. Our soul (mind) – where old habits of thinking are challenged, and renewed
 - 3. Our body – acting like Christ from within – not imitation from without

II Relationships

- A. Our covenant with God is paramount
 - 1. We must never violate our covenant with God – conscience – priorities/principles
 - 2. The covenant we have with God gives us parameters or borders on relationships
- B. Loving one another
 - 1. We are to judge (discern) – both motive and action; but not condemn – Mt. 7:1-5
 - 2. Bad company corrupts good morals – 1st Cor. 15:33 (welcoming, not accepting)
- C. Preparing for marriage – God has the perfect choice – don’t go on a buying spree!
 - 1. Dating vs. Courtship – courtship “testing” of relationships – equally yoked?
 - 2. We are to maintain standards when building relationships with the opposite sex
- D. Relationships in a home, workplace, and in the world – Mt. 10:34-38
 - 1. We do all we can to preserve relationships – peace with all men (Ro. 12:18)
 - 2. However, at times, it may not be possible – we may have to choose God...

The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson Seven – The Importance of the Local Church
(Study 15-16, 19 in *Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation*)

I The Church – Matthew 16:16-20; 28:18-20

- A. The Church is *God's primary method for bringing a measure of the Kingdom to earth*
 - 1. The “rock of revelation” – who Jesus is as Lord and Savior – every believer world-wide
 - 2. Five main ministry gifts are given to the church to help it mature (Eph. 4:11-16)
 - a. These ministries transcend denominations and other secondary distinctions
 - b. The purpose of these ministries is to equip the average believer to do them (tracks)
 - 1. Apostle – one sent – vision to lay foundations and strategy
 - 2. Prophet – one who declares – points out error and lifts up God’s standard
 - 3. Pastor – one who cares – exhibiting compassion
 - 4. Evangelist – one who reaches the lost – loving people to redemption
 - 5. Teacher – one who instructs believers so they understand how to live in Christ
 - c. Note that in Eph. 4:16 if members release their gifts the body heals itself
 - 3. The purpose of the Church is to *evangelize and disciple the nations* (great commission)
 - a. Evangelize individuals through divine opportunities – “preach the gospel”
 - b. Disciple believers to apply the Bible to every area of life
 - 1. Reach people from all ethnic backgrounds – “teach them to observe”
 - 2. Transform the culture of nations brought to Christ – “all things commanded”
- B. The local church – the geographical expression of God’s universal church – Mt. 18:15-18
 - 1. Believers work out differences and relational conflicts in covenant commitment
 - a. We are to find and emphasize that which unites us in any area - unity
 - b. Then focusing on those areas, we work together to serve our neighborhoods - union
 - 2. God designed the local church to be a model for culture – salt and light – Mt. 5:13-16
 - a. The church in Jerusalem was in a unique position, with many visitors
 - b. The apostles asked if anyone wanted to donate proceeds to help them
 - c. Everyone owned their property, and it was all voluntary, not a model for socialism!
 - 3. The church is one body made up of many diverse personalities and ethnic identities
 - 4. The local church has officers of elders and deacons – government *by consent*
 - a. Outside ministries recognized by local leadership comes by invitation
 - b. Relationships or covenants prepare for when input may be needed – no hierarchy

II Authority and Submission – responsibility of deacons and elders – Acts 6:1-6; 20:28

- A. The power flow of government in the church – from God to the people, then to leaders
- B. Deacons – to serve by overseeing the church’s stewardship of gifts and property
 - 1. To see that the resources God has given are well taken care of
 - 2. To oversee volunteer work to see that budgets are ethically stewarded
- C. Elders – to serve by overseeing the church’s vision and unique calling
 - 1. Guard the church as a watchman – against compromise, false theology
 - 2. Guard the “souls” of committed to the church – they give account (Heb. 13:7,17)
 - 3. Oversee church discipline – personal confrontation of another in unconfessed sin

The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson Eight – Tithing and Productivity
(Study 17-18 in Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation)

I Biblical attitude toward Money and Economics

- A. Money – a medium of exchange
 1. Proverbs 30:7-9 – a balanced attitude – give me neither poverty nor riches
 2. Poverty through avoidable debt – through unwise exchanges, you have less than you need.
This is viewed in the Bible as a sort of “slavery” – James 5:1-8; Pr. 24:30-34
- B. Economics – 1st Timothy 6:10
 1. Household management – the stewardship of internal and external goods
 2. A distinction between “poverty and debt” as well as “productivity and riches”
 - a. A “poverty spirit” – “loss is godliness” – avoid this extreme (avoidable debt)
 - b. A “greedy spirit” – “gain is godliness” – avoid this extreme (selfish riches)

II The Tithe – the first tenth of all that is produced – land, capital, “income”

- A. One-tenth of the fruit of land belongs to God (Ge. 14:30; Lev. 27:30-33; Num. 18:21-22)
 1. The first tithe was for the “sanctuary” – 10% of our gross income to a local church
 2. The second tithe was for “festivals” – 10% above the tithe – Deuteronomy 12:6-7
 3. The third tithe every three years “poor” – 3.3% each year – Deuteronomy 14:27-29
- B. If believers tithed... - Malachi 3:10-12
 1. They would prosper – “an open heaven” – more than we need to give to others
 2. We would tend to overcome the enemy in spiritual warfare
 3. The church would gain influence with the culture – nations calling the church “blessed”
 4. Consider this: less than 1% of believers in America tithe; the average of those who do is only \$17 per week, or less than a thousand a year, but ¾ of those who do give donate more than 10%
 5. What could be done if churches had the resources? Serving the community and doing the charitable work that is done now by government – yet charitable work continues as well!
- C. What does it mean to “live by faith”?
 1. Faith is “confidence” in its object – God *and* His Word (productivity)
 - a. We have confidence that God will provide – though He could test us
 - b. We have confidence that the productive (work ethic) will be blessed
 - c. The goal is to be able to give above and beyond the tithe – Luke 6:38
 2. Living by faith means trusting God as well as having a budget (a plan)
 - a. A budget means planning ahead on average income and having a priority
 - b. Prioritizing expenses and putting away in categories helps with self-discipline
 3. Living by faith is *not* living by other’s productivity or an entitlement attitude

III Economic Productivity vs. Socialism/Marxism – Ge. 2-3 – “seeds of content and discontent”

- A. Economic productivity rests on some of the following (Genesis 2:15-24):
 1. God’s unit is individual property and productivity – Garden of Eden – private property
 2. God blesses both producer (supply) and consumer (demand) – choose any tree but one
 3. God’s market internally governs our wants and desires – abundance to share
- B. Economic socialism/Marxism rests on some of the following (Genesis 3:6)
 1. (pride) basic unit of survival is the community – group – “did God say?” (discontent)
 2. (pleasure) “zero sum fallacy” when one wins another loses – privileged and oppressed
 3. (power) - a market built on atheism will replace God with state regulation

The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson Nine – The Return of Christ, the Last Days and the Advance of His Kingdom
(Study 20-22 in Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation)

I The Return of Christ (Study 20)

- A. Two extremes to avoid throughout history:
 - 1. An obsession with the Return of Christ and its “signs” – *avoiding responsibility*
 - 2. An avoidance of the accountability of Christ’s Return – *no eternal perspective*
- B. There are numerous positions on how events will proceed prior to His Return
 - 1. The Tribulation – past (post-trib) or future (pre-trib) or (mid-trib)?
 - 2. The Millennium – present (post-mil), or future (pre-mil)?
 - 3. The Anti-Christ / Mark of the Beast – past, present, or future?
- C. Our Church stance – preach the gospel, He will bodily Return, but occupy until He comes!
 - 1. We affirm, with the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, that “*that all believers ought to live in fear of God’s final judgment yet in expectation of His glorious return.*”
 - 2. “*We are to live as though Christ were coming today but work as though He were not coming for 1,000 years.*” – (A. W. Tozer, *Preparing for Jesus Return*)
- D. The resurrection of the Dead – 1st Thessalonians 4:16-17; 1st Corinthians 15:41-44
 - 1. The dead in Christ shall rise first, then those alive at His return
 - 2. Our physical bodies will be transformed into a new body (yet similar in form)
 - 3. At the final judgment our names must be in the Book of Life – Rev. 20:11-15

II The “Last Days” (Study 21)

- A. The “last days” began with Jesus’ Ascension – Acts 1:7-11; 2:17ff
 - 1. The “sign” given for Christ’s return is the maturity of the Church (increased power)
 - 2. Another sign is “the advance of Christ’s Kingdom – “to the uttermost parts of the earth”
- B. The phrase “last days” refers initially to the end of the Jewish system of sacrifice
 - 1. Prophecies of Matthew 24; Luke 21 – the Olivet Discourse; fulfilled in that generation – 70 AD
 - 2. However, though to the Jew first, in principle, the same is true for the future (Gentiles)
 - 3. Each sign given by Jesus was fulfilled in the 70 AD generation: though still relevant today
 - 4. God will fulfill His promises to the Jewish people (not the secular State of Israel) – Rom. 11

III The Advance of Christ’s Kingdom (Study 22)

- A. The Return of Christ is not a rescue mission
 - 1. It is the culmination of the maturity of the Church birthing a measure of the Kingdom on earth
 - 2. We are to “occupy” until He returns – trade in the marketplace of ideas – live out the gospel!
- B. The Victorious Church – a Bride and a City - Revelation 21:2-3
 - 1. The Church is a bride who has made herself ready (the year-long betrothal)
 - a. The dowry for the church is the nations – several transformed before His return – Psalm 2
 - b. We are to be transformed into Christ’s image – putting on His character
 - 2. The Church is also a holy city whose works are righteous (behavior and example)
 - a. God’s goal is of a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle – Ephesians 5:26
 - b. We fulfill the Great commission incrementally – evangelism and discipleship (the nations)
- C. Evidence of this in spite of what we see on the news!
 - 1. The progress of the Kingdom world-wide
 - 2. The number of nations being transformed today

The New Testament Church - Biblical Foundations Course
Lesson Ten – Living a Victorious Life in Christ
(Study 23-26, 28 in *Bible Studies for a Firm Foundation*)

I Growing in our Faith (Study 23)

- A. What is the principle of sowing and reaping? (Galatians 6:6-10)
 - 1. It is cause and effect, a law that applies to spiritual growth
 - 2. What we sow, we reap – the kind of thoughts, attitudes, ideas we plant
 - 3. Where we sow, we reap – the kind of soil, heart condition (see also Matthew 13)
 - 4. How we sow, we reap – sowing liberally, diligently “in due season we reap”
 - 5. Good works sows seeds – the seed is in the fruit (others bless God) – Mt. 5:16
- B. How does this “increase our faith”? (Romans 10:17) – hearing God and His Word = faith
 - 1. Faith is like a mustard seed – in other words, it is confidence in God
 - 2. Faith is only as valid as its object – the more we know of God (Word), faith increases
 - 3. Today believers put more faith in faith than in God and His Word! (Romans 10:17)
 - a. We ought to rehearse who God is – pray His attributes
 - b. We can then rehearse who we are in Christ – pray who Christ is in us

II Being a Doer of the Word (Study 24)

- A. We receive with meekness the “implanted Word” – James 1:21-25
 - 1. If we hear the Word, but don’t act on it – we deceive ourselves
 - 2. If we observe our natural face in the mirror (the Word), we forget who we really are
 - 3. If we look into the perfect law of liberty (who we are in Christ), we are blessed
- B. Faith and works
 - 1. True religion begins in the heart – the tongue – and self-control
 - 2. It then ends with good works – visiting the orphans and widows
 - 3. Both faith and works are the measure of our fruit – not one or the other
 - a. Our belief (faith) in God’s Word is internal, given to us by grace
 - b. The fruit of the Spirit (works) fulfill God’s law (standard of righteousness)

III Confessing the Word (Study 25-26) – Romans 10:10

- A. *With the heart one believes unto righteousness... with the mouth confession unto salvation.*
 - 1. Confession “*is faith’s way of expressing itself.*” (Firm Foundation, Study 25, p. 199)
 - 2. Confessing God’s Word is a critical practice in growing in faith
- B. The Power of the Tongue – Proverbs 18:21; James 3:1-12
 - 1. The tongue is like the rudder of a ship; sparking a fire for good or evil - steers our lives
 - 2. To be “double tongued” so to speak, speaking blessing and cursing, stunts our growth

IV Soli Deo Gloria – all for the Glory of God (Study 28)

- A. *Therefore... whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.* – 1st Corinthians 10:31
 - 1. The glory of God is His character, who He is, meaning “weight”
 - 2. Though we are involved and obedient to Him, He gets all the credit
- B. The Glory of God can also be His manifest presence and pleasure – our ultimate goal!