

Foundations of Faith study series: Introduction

Our reason for meeting today is simply because Jesus commissioned every disciple to go make disciples and teach them to obey (Matthew 28:18-20).

Why are we here? Two thousand years ago, the disciples took this commission seriously. We are the fruit of their conviction to obey.

Proverbs 24:11 *Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward **slaughter**.*

Proverbs 11:30- *“He who wins souls is wise.”*

VISION: Wouldn't it be great if every disciple in the OC Region sat in a Bible study with someone in 2019?

Introduction & Foundation

This is not part of the study series. Rather this is a general training on four practical ways you and I can be most effective:

1. Need for Training (John 12:47-50, Mark 1:16-18, Acts 14:1, 2:36-38)
2. The role of a Study series
3. The Approach to conversion
4. The Study Series (review it)

1. The Need for training:

John 12:47-50

- Jesus is the exact representation of God.
- Jesus needed training (Jesus was trained on what to say and how to say it)
 - If Jesus (The Word of God) Himself needed Training, so do we

Mark 1:16-18

- The disciples needed to follow Jesus to be effective fishers of men
- They needed to learn what to say and how to say it

Acts 14:1

- They spoke so effectively that a great number were converted
- Why effective? They were trained and sought to train themselves.
- The Bible is our training manual to teach us what to say & how to say it!

Acts 2:36-41

- The Crescendo of the 1st sermon ever given to a non-Christian audience
- Those at Pentecost heard the truth of Jesus and correct doctrine.
- However, Peter has to speak many other words to warn them and to plead with them to save themselves from this corrupt generation

Q: Who taught Peter? Jesus taught him what to say and how to say it

Eph. 6:19-20

- Even Paul wanted to be more effective and asked for prayer to grow.
- **TRUTH:** There is a human element in the delivery of the gospel
- We know from Isaiah 55, that the word of God never comes back empty
- God wants us to have a learners heart. To know what to say/how to say it

After Jesus came to earth, lead his ministry, died and rose again he entrusted his message to 12 unschooled and ordinary men.

- Jesus wanted to share the responsibility with us to reach the world
- Jesus believes in you and I

2. What is the role of the “Foundations of Faith” Bible study series?

A: To provide training that will allow any disciple, of any age, to go into a lost world equipped to explain God’s plan of salvation in the Bible. It also provides:

- **Assurance-** A solid Biblical Foundation for new Christians life
- **Confidence-** You can feel good about presenting the information so you can focus on meeting the needs of the person
- **Training-** This helps our training Process so we can all learn together.
- **Unifying-** We’re all united in our mission to seek and save the lost

3. What is the best approach to communicate the gospel? In order from least effective to most effective:

1. **Persuasive Approach:** High Pressure car sales man approach
 - a. The persuader may feel good
 - b. The learner may not have felt good
 - c. Produces head nodding as though they agree...but then you never see them again after the first study
2. **Debate Approach:** Back and Forth but very little listening
 - a. Don't go looking for a debate
 - b. Debates breed pride & competitiveness in our culture
 - c. The person studying may not feel heard or loved by you
3. **Teacher Approach:** Teacher student model
 - a. Teacher provides info but doesn't take time to get to the heart
4. **Quick to Listen Approach:** A give and take approach
 - a. Humility, listening and respecting what the other person says
 - b. 1st Peter 3:15, James 1:19
 - i. Do this with gentleness and respect
 - ii. Respect their Spiritual journey (don't discount past religious experience)
 - iii. Quick to listen, slow to speak & slow to become angry
 - iv. Respect God's word and respect the person

- c. Jesus was amazing at asking questions
- d. Listening is the greatest pathway to the heart
- e. Treat them like friends: *People don't care how much you know...until they know how much you care.*
- f. **Quick to listen...is the most effective approach** in Bible studies
 - i. A good doctor asks a lot of questions
 - ii. Find out what makes them tick?

The most effective way to get to a persons heart is by listening

- Ask them how the verse affects them or what they got from it.
- Do this after each verse to be sure they understand what they're reading.

Meditate on this:

Our goal is not to convey knowledge or win an argument. The goal is to help them build a heart of faith, love and connection with God and men.

The Heart is the wellspring of life. Pray for God's word to change people's heart!

Practicals:

1. **Atmosphere?** Conducive and comfortable. Studying at McDonalds might be uncomfortable. I want people to feel safe (your house or their house)
2. **How many disciples should be in the study?** (2 or 3 vs. whole small group at once) Although, at some point, everyone in your Small Group should be in the studies (avoid the umbilical cord relationship).
3. **Give your whole heart to learning the studies** (Col. 3:23)
4. **Eye Contact** – If the person studying is talking...look them in the eyes.
5. **Seating:** Don't sit too far away or too close to the person studying. Sit across from them (Re-arrange the seats if necessary).
6. **Trust in God's word vs. yourself to move the persons heart.** Isaiah 55:10-12
God's word never comes back empty & will accomplish God's desires.

4. I WILL give my whole heart to learning the "Foundations of Faith" studies

- **I WILL** memorize the weekly memory verses
- **I WILL** memorize the order of the studies we go over
- **I WILL** have fun!
- **I WILL** create great memories with my small group as we help each other learn and grow.

Imagine if every one of us decides to take this study series seriously by learning the studies, memorizing scriptures and studying the Bible with at least one person this year!

God will bless the OC Region.