

Foundations Session One

Discussion Format

Goal: *To transform the way believers view Christianity. At the end of the lesson, they should be able to explain the concepts of the Great Commission and begin to view their lives in this context.*

Icebreaker:

- Where did you live between the ages of 9 and 12?
- If you could live in any time period, when would you live and why?
- What do you want to be written in your obituary and/or what would your last words be?

Lesson:

- What is the significance of "last words"?
- **Text:** Matthew 28:16-20
- What is significant about these words? (*Jesus' last words*)
- What is Jesus saying to do? (*Greek – The main emphasis is on "make," "teach," and "baptize." "Go" is implied.*)
- To whom was Jesus talking to? (*vs. 20 – "everything I have commanded you"*)
- What does the word "disciple" mean? Would anyone here call themselves a "disciple"? (*Acts 11:25-26*)
- What promise does Jesus make here? Why is that important? (*Be with you always*)

Application:

- Someone look out the window and tell me what you see. (*Louisiana*)
- How is it possible for us to make disciples of all nations?

Foundations Session One

Homework

**ASK A MINIMUM OF 5 PEOPLE YOU DON'T KNOW (PREFERABLY NON-CHRISTIANS)
TWO QUESTIONS:**

1. WOULD YOU PLEASE DEFINE FOR ME WHAT YOU UNDERSTAND A CHRISTIAN TO BE, AND
2. COULD YOU PLEASE TELL ME YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF HOW ONE BECOMES A CHRISTIAN?

Foundations Session Two

Discussion Format

Goal: *Covering the “typical” ideas of Christianity and contrasting it to the Biblical underlying themes of the Kingdom of God. This lesson should begin with discussion of the typical ideas of Christianity and end with an introduction to the Kingdom of God.*

Icebreaker:

- Ask class members to discuss some of their findings from last week’s assignment.

Three Manifestations of American Religious Ambiguity:

- Before you became a Christian, what did you think about Christianity?
- Where did you get your ideas of Christianity from?
- In American culture, there are three main lies that most people have come to believe. First, discuss the ancestral approach. What are the implications of this? Why is it not valid?
- Second, discuss the traditionalist approach. What are the implications of this and why is it not valid?
- Third, discuss the moralistic approach. What are the implications of this and why is it not valid?
- What is the ultimate impact of these ideas? *(Causes people to reject Christ and depend on something else for salvation)*
- How can we combat this? *(Just as Secret Service and other government officials whose job it is to combat counterfeiters study legitimate currency to recognize the fake, it should be our job to study what Jesus truly represented in order to recognize lies and false trends. Thankfully, the Gospels were written not just as feel good and moral books, but are meant to educate believers and inform seekers. They are not just Spiritual documents, but historical ones that we can learn from when we study them.)*

Text: Mark 1:14-20

- What is Jesus saying here? *(The Kingdom of God is here! Repent!)*
- What comes to your mind when you hear the words Kingdom of God?
- Notice, last week we started off by studying Jesus’ “last words.” This week, we see His first. Why do you think Mark chose to begin his gospel with this as Jesus’ first statement? *(Obviously, these were probably not the first ever words said by Jesus. In fact, Mark was not even one of the original twelve, but came into the picture later in Acts. However, this concept of the Kingdom was central to Jesus’ message, and is the context for the entire book of Mark. To misunderstand what Jesus meant here is to misunderstand His entire message. Notice none of the disciples ever asked Him what it meant – they understood the historical context of what these words meant. And that is where we will pick up next week.)*

Foundations Session Three

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson introduces the concept of the Kingdom of God and focuses on the underlying Old Testament themes of the Sovereignty of God and an introduction to the mystery of evil.*

Icebreaker:

- Ask class members to recollect last week's lesson. *(Remind of all the differing ideas floating around of Christianity and the need to look at the source to discover what Jesus actually intended Christianity to be.)*

Lesson:

- **Text:** Mark 1:14-20
- What is Jesus saying here? *(The Kingdom of God is here! Repent!)*
- What comes to your mind when you hear the words Kingdom of God?
- Notice, our first week we started off by studying Jesus' "last words." This week, we see His first. Why do you think Mark chose to begin his gospel with this as Jesus' first statement? *(Obviously, these were probably not the first ever words said by Jesus. In fact, Mark was not even one of the original twelve, but came into the picture later in Acts. However, this concept of the Kingdom was central to Jesus' message, and is the context for the entire book of Mark. To misunderstand what Jesus meant here is to misunderstand His entire message. Notice none of the disciples ever asked Him what it meant – they understood the historical context of what these words meant.)*
- Let's try to understand some of the context of what the disciples would have understood what the Kingdom of God means. Common sense tells us that every kingdom has to have a what?
- **Text: Psalm 145:11-14** – What is this text saying? *(God is the King of all Creation. He is sovereign)*
- What are some concepts – Biblical concepts – that come to mind when you think of the Sovereignty of God? **(Creation: God has the right of ownership. Right of Redemption: He is the only one with the authority to forgive our debt of sin.)**
- The second historical Old Testament theme to the Kingdom of God that the disciples would have been familiar with is the concept of the mystery of evil. Notice, as early as Genesis chapter three, evil was there in the form of the tempting serpent. What are some common views, today, of where evil comes from? *(Best guess: Freedom allows love. It also allows the rejection of God.)*
- The Bible clearly tells of the reality of evil. It does not, however, tell us where it came from. It just tells us where it is embodied and where it is observed. The Bible tells us what we need to know, not necessarily what we want to know. Next week, we will pick up more on this topic.

Foundations Session Four

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson discusses the mystery of evil. It covers its source, nature, impact, mediums, goal, and future. Students should leave this session understanding what evil is, what it is trying to do in their lives, and how they should react when confronted by it.*

Icebreaker:

- Ask class members to recollect last week's lesson. (*We discussed the Sovereignty of God and were introduced to the lesson on evil.*)

Lesson:

- **Text:** Isaiah 14:12-17; Revelation 12:1-9
- These are the passages where we traditionally get our main ideas about Satan and evil. What are some things this passage is saying? (*Red dragon w/ horns. Cast out of heaven. Very powerful but yet punished. Tried to become greater than he was. Wanted to usurp, or steal, God's glory. Deceived 1/3rd of the angels.*)
- From this passage, where do we see that evil is embodied? (*In angels – messengers*)
- **Text:** II Cor. 11:14
- What can we learn here about the nature of evil?
- Why do you think it is important for us to know that evil disguises itself?
- What are some areas in particular that you see evil at work deceiving people? (*It attacks us through our intellect and "ability to reason things out"; finding security in this world*)
- Do you think it is possible to be neutral – to be neither good nor evil? Why or why not?
- What are some of the impacts evil has on mankind? (*We have a sin nature. Man is enslaved to sin and are not what we were intended to be*)
- What is the ultimate goal of evil?
- **Text:** Zechariah 14:9
- What can we infer from this passage about the ultimate future of evil?
- With this knowledge that there is an enemy out there – a deceiver – what kind of lives should we live? What should we do to combat this enemy? (*James 4:7 – James writing to Jews "scattered throughout the world." In this passage, he is rebuking them for having wrong motives in their relationship with God. They have become enticed by the things of the world and quarrel with each other. James says, starting in verse 6, though, that God gives us more grace! Despite the evil that corrupts us, God continues to give grace "to the humble" while opposing the proud. In this context, what does it mean to submit to God?*)

Foundations Session Five

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson begins the discussion on the eight different attributes of the Kingdom of God as described by the prophets. Students should know that the Kingdom of God is synonymous with the Old Testament term “Day of the Lord.” They should realize that many of the ideas the Jews got of the Kingdom of God came from the prophets, and recognize some of the traditions and distortions that developed because of it. They should be challenged to look at their own beliefs and learn to recognize distortions when confronted with them. This lesson looks specifically at the idea of judgment.*

Icebreaker:

- Ask class members to recollect last week’s lesson. (*We discussed the mystery of evil.*)

Lesson:

- Setting context: KoG brought to mind images of the Sovereignty of God and the mystery of evil. There were eight major attributes to the KoG that were developed into Jewish tradition during the time of the prophets.
- Kingdom of God vs. Day of the Lord
- **Text:** Zechariah 14:1-21
- What are several attributes of the Kingdom of God that are in this passage?
- What would the main overall theme of the passage be? (*Judgment*)
- **Text:** Zephaniah 3:8
- Who in particular is being judged in these passages? (*nations of the earth united against the Jewish people*)
- What do you think the effect these passages may have had on the Jewish people?
- What is the danger of taking these passages out of context? (*racist attitude, seeing one’s self as “God’s special people” who do not have to fear judgment*)
- **Text:** Amos 5:18-24
- Keeping in mind that this passage was written to the Israeli people (Amos 5:4), what importance does this passage add to the idea of God’s judgment?
- Do you think it is easier to think of God’s judgment in relation to others or in relation to yourself? Why?
- Many people today say that Christianity uses fear tactics, emphasizing God’s judgment, as a way to manipulate people to have the same beliefs we have. Do you think this is true? Do you think that practice is right or wrong?
- What is a healthy way to think of the Kingdom of God and convey it to others? (In what ways did Jesus use this idea of judgment?)

Foundations Session Six

Discussion Format

Goal: *Students should be familiar with the Old Testament ideas of salvation and reconciliation.*

Review:

- Ask class members to recollect last week's lesson. (*We discussed the Old Testament theme of Judgment.*)
- Why do you think it is important to understand God's judgment?

Lesson:

- **Text:** Jeremiah 23:1-8
- What do we learn about the Kingdom of God from this passage? (*Salvation*)
- What do you think the shepherds represent in this passage?
- **Text:** Amos 9:11-13
- What does this text add to the understanding of salvation? (*Reinforces the idea of God gathering the people of Israel and uniting them under one King.*)
- How did the Jewish people understand these scriptures? (*Ultimately lead to their rejection of Christ.*)
- **Text:** Zechariah 2:10-13 – What does this text add? (*Idea of all nations being joined – salvation for all nations!*)
- **Text:** Isaiah 65:17 – What does this add? (*Idea that the coming of God's leadership will recreate all of Earth: a recapturing of the world's original grandeur.*)
- **Text:** Matthew 18:10-14 – What do Jesus' words add to the idea of salvation?
- Do you think it is important that the shepherd goes after the sheep rather than the sheep returning on its own?
- Do you think it is important that we study salvation in light of judgment, or do you think it can stand on its own? (*Judgment is important because it gives us a sense of our own sin. Brings us to a state of humiliation and sorrow.*)

Foundations Session Seven

Discussion Format

Goal: *Students should be familiar with what the Old Testament says about the covenant God made with man, as well as the promised new covenant. They should have an understanding of how the covenant was enhanced, but also understand that the new does not “erase” the old.*

Review:

- Ask class members to recollect last week’s lesson. (*We discussed the Old Testament theme of Salvation.*)

Lesson:

- Briefly give your reaction to the following statement: Jesus came to forgive our sins and bring a new covenant. We do not, therefore, need to live our lives according to the laws and guidelines of the Old Testament.
- **Text:** Jeremiah 31:31-34 – What does this passage say about the Kingdom of God?
- What is the definition of “covenant”? (*A binding agreement between two people*)
- What are some modern day examples of a covenant?
- What are some Biblical examples of a covenant? (*Gen. 9:8-17*)
- What do people refer to when they say talk about the “old covenant”? (*Deuteronomy 29:1-29*)
- In Deuteronomy 29:1, Moses writes, “These are the terms of the covenant the Lord commanded Moses to make with the Israelites” What terms are being referred to? (*Deuteronomy 1 – 28!!!!*)
- The gist of the covenant is verses 12 & 13. What is significant about it?
- With this understanding, let’s read Jeremiah 31:31-34 again ...
- Why did God say a new covenant was needed? (*Because they broke it.*)
- How do you think they broke the original covenant? (*More than not just following a few rules. They didn’t recognize God as their God. They refused to be His people. Notice, though, He never ceased being their God! Read vs. 35 & 36.*)
- What is the biggest difference between the old covenant and the new one? (*New one will be written on our heart and not on tablets of stone!*)
- Why is this significant? (*Still moral in effect, but it has been internalized. We no longer need to refer to a list of rules for us to know what is right, but we have the Holy Spirit guiding us.*)
- What is your reaction to the following statement: Jesus came to forgive our sins and bring a new covenant. We do not, therefore, need to live our lives according to the laws and guidelines of the Old Testament. (*Keep in mind the heart of God’s covenant and why it was made – to recognize God as God, and to become the people of God! In Galatians, Paul is writing to a people who appear to have once accepted the teaching of salvation through grace, but have fallen into a false gospel of legalism. In that context, he writes verses 3:15-24. Summing up that the law was put in place so that we will recognize sin for what it is, and will then see the importance of grace. Grace is not a rejection of the law, but it is more like an added layer.*)

Foundations Session Eight

Discussion Format

Goal: *Students should be familiar with the Old Testament ideas of the Holy Spirit and its significance. This lesson is not necessarily about the doctrine of the baptism or gifts of the Spirit, but should be focused on what the Jewish people understood the Spirit of God to be.*

Review:

- Ask class members to recollect last week's lesson. (*We discussed the Old Testament theme of the New Covenant.*)
- Again, last week we discussed the New Covenant literally being written inside of us vs. written on tablets of stone. How is this possible? (John 14:26)

Lesson:

- **Text:** Joel 2:28-32 – What does this text tell us about the KoG that we have not already discussed? (*Holy Spirit*)
- What do we usually think of when we think of the Holy Spirit?
- In this passage, who is God's Spirit poured out upon?
- Why is this significant? (*Not just "special" prophets or priests – but made available to all people, common folk included*)
- What do you think the prevailing thought of the Spirit of God was in the Old Testament? (*The Holy Spirit represents God being present with His people*)
- **Text:** Exodus 33:15-17 – What does this scripture add to our understanding of the presence of God? (*In the Jewish mind, before all the rules, promises, etc., that established them as the people of God; it is His Presence with them that sets them apart!*)
- What are other instances of God's presence with his people in the Old Testament? (Garden of Eden; Tabernacle: Ex. 40:35-36; Temple: 1 Kings 8:10-11)
- Notice that when God's presence was around, people couldn't be there! The sin nature of Human Beings literally would cause their death if they were to enter God's presence. This is why it was of such importance for everything to be just right and done in the correct way when the high priest would enter into the Holy of Holies once a year. With this in mind, what do Paul's message about our bodies literally being temples of the Holy Spirit, and this prophecy in Joel about the Spirit of God being poured out upon all people, mean for us?

Foundations Session Nine

Discussion Format

Goal: *Students should be familiar with the Old Testament idea of justice.*

Review:

- Ask class members to recollect last week's lesson. (*We discussed the Old Testament theme of the Holy Spirit.*)

Lesson:

- **Text:** Isaiah 42:1-9 – What is happening in this text?
- What does this text tell us about the KoG that we have not already discussed? (*justice*)
- What are the usual associations we make with the word justice – what is human justice?
- What is unique about God's judgment?
- How does verse three add to the idea of God's judgment? (*God's justice defends the broken. Remember the beatitudes!*)
- What are some historical examples of "broken" people being defended?
- How can we today help to defend the broken? (*I think we need to be careful to avoid being 'social justice' extremists; however, we do need to keep our eyes open to the injustices in the world around us and recognize the privileged position God has given us as 'American Christians.' Despite the economic troubles and \$4 gas, we still have, comparably, more wealth than probably 80-90% of the world. How are we using it? Giving financially and timely to charitable causes.*)
- How does verse seven add to the idea of God's judgment? (*God's justice literally frees of from those things that hold us in bondage.*)
- What are examples of things that can hold people in bondage?
- How has God freed you from bondage?
- What should our response to this freedom be? (*Thankfulness and helping others find freedom.*)

Foundations Session Ten

Discussion Format

Goal: *Students should be familiar with the Old Testament idea of the Messiah.*

Review:

- Ask class members to recollect last week's lesson. (*We discussed the Old Testament theme of justice.*)

Lesson:

- **Text:** Isaiah 11:1-5 – What do we learn about the Kingdom of God from this passage? (*The Messiah! Basically, all the topics we have talked about thus far are brought together in the Jewish idea of the Messiah. Judgment, salvation, the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit, and justice all are brought to us because of the Messiah.*)
- Study the text in context – Explain context. What does this context show the Messiah as doing?
- **Text:** Isaiah 16:5 – What does this text say about the Messiah? (*Notice the positive characteristics – “in love a throne will be established”; “in faithfulness an man will sit on it”*)
- Again, context. This statement made in the middle of a prophecy against Moab. Why do you think that? What effect do you think this fact may have on the Jewish idea of the Messiah? (*Moabites descendants of Lot and his daughters. The Moabites where also the people who tried to persuade Balaam to curse the Israelites in the journey out of Egypt. Not a very good relationship, and was probably viewed by the Israelites as a nation representing sin.*)
- **Text:** Isaiah 42:1-4 – What does this text add to our understanding of the Messiah? (*Notice He is referred to as God's servant! Some humility in that?*)
- **Text:** Isaiah 61:1-2a – This passage was used by Jesus to announce his coming as the Messiah. What do we learn from this passage? Why do you think Jesus would have chosen this passage out of all the others? (*Notice it doesn't necessarily have all the imagery of the Messiah coming on a white horse freeing the people of Israel from persecution. He wasn't on the thrown in this passage. This passage shows almost a more humble, spiritual task. It does go on to say other things that will happen; however, at least in Luke, Jesus stops after “proclaim the year of the Lord's favor”.*)
- Jeremiah 23:1-8 – What does this text add?
- What did the Jewish people expect the Messiah to be? And how might their expectations be different than how He is described in the Old Testament?
- How might we fall into the same trap? What can we do to prevent this?

Foundations Session Eleven

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson covers John's ministry and briefly introduce Jesus' ministry. While not able to touch on every aspect of John's ministry, we will contrast it to that of the Rabbi's and show how he prepared the way for Christ's teachings. Students should think about what their response to these teachings on the KoG should be.*

Review:

- Ask class members to recollect last week's lesson. (*We discussed the Old Testament theme of the Messiah.*)

Lesson:

- Review goal of lesson. *Up to this point, we've been reading prophecies about the coming Kingdom. Now, we will get to see some of these prophecies in action!*
- How would you describe John the Baptist? (*Ate locust and honey. Was a 'wild man.' Not philosopher, more along lines of a prophet.*)
- **Text:** Mt. 3:1-12
- What are some things in particular that John is saying? What was his main message? (*The KoG is near – it's coming. Repent! It is important to remember that John's message is fully rooted in the OT vision of the KoG that we've been studying.*)
- How is John's teaching different from the Rabbinical teaching going on during that period?
- Vs. 5 shows John preaching to Jews as well as Gentiles. Why is this important?
- The Pharisees came. Who were they? What ideas did they have that John would have rejected?
- The Sadducees came. Who were they? What ideas did they have that John would have rejected?
- The religious teachers in John's time ostracized three groups of people that John (and Jesus) seem to have gone out of the way to minister to: tax collectors, prostitutes, and sinners. The point of this is that the KoG is bigger than their religious assumptions. Who is being ostracized today? (Lk. 3)
- Does John give an "ethical message"? If so, what is it? (*Baptism and ethical change.*) (Lk. 3 shows more of this ethical message.)
- Does John claim to be the Messiah?
- What does John say the difference will be between his ministry and the Messiah's ministry? (*Water vs. Holy Spirit. Repentance vs. God's presence.*)
- **Text:** Mk. 1:14-15 – What is Jesus saying? How is it different that what John is saying?
- The paradox – "the time is fulfilled" vs. "the Kingdom is near" in Jesus' speech. Next week!

Foundations Session Twelve

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson covers Jesus' ministry and what He taught about the KoG.*

Review:

- Ask class members to recollect last week's lesson. (*We discussed John the Baptist's ministry and message.*)

Lesson:

- **Text:** Mk. 1:14-15 – What is Jesus saying? How is it different that what John is saying?
- The paradox – “the time is fulfilled” vs. “the Kingdom is near” in Jesus' speech. If the kingdom has really come, why is there still evil?
- In fact, there are two realities to the Kingdom:
- **Text:** Luke 17:20-21 – What does Jesus say here about the KoG? (*The KoG is not necessarily a physical place. Where Christ is, there is the Kingdom. It's internal – in us because Christ is in us.*)
- **Text:** Luke 11: 14-20 – What is Jesus saying here about the KoG? (*Jesus' power proves that the KoG is Present.*)
- **Text:** Mt. 11:2-4 – John's message was the KoG is coming soon. Here, he asks Jesus, “Are you the one?” How does Jesus answer? (*Tell him what you see! The Holy Spirit's ministry through Jesus is evidence of the KoG.*)
- **Text:** Mt. 26:29 – What does this text say about the Kog? (*Despite these obvious references to the KoG being present, some scriptures indicate it is still to come*)
- **Text:** Mt. 16:27-28 – What is Jesus saying here? (*Associates the KoG with His second coming.*)
- **Text:** Mt. 13:24 – 30 – What idea about the KoG do we get from this? (*Future judgments*)
- **Text:** Mt. 25:31-34 – What idea about the KoG do we get from this? (*Future promises*)
- The point is this – how can the KoG be both present yet in the future? (*D-Day vs. VE Day*)
- Okay ... so what does that mean for us?
- We are to be a repentant and eschatological people?!?! In other words, we are to live for the future. We recognize that the age we live in still has evil; yet we live for the day that it will be vanquished.

Foundations Session Thirteen

Discussion Format

Goal: *Introduces the topic of the Six Realities of Christ's Calling and covers the first reality that Christ is always the initiator of the calling. Students should leave this session with a sense of gratitude that Christ called them into relationship with Himself.*

Review:

- Up until this point, we've been building upon the concept of the Kingdom of God. First, we looked at several attributes of the KoG such as God's sovereignty, judgment, and the New Covenant. We then looked at both the teachings of John the Baptist and Jesus in relation to the KoG. We will now shift gears a bit from *what* Christ calls us to (the KoG) to the *how* and the *implications* of that call.

Lesson:

- Have several people share their story of when Christ called them to follow after Him.
- **Text:** Mark 3:13-19 – What is happening in this passage? (*Jesus calling disciples*)
- What do we know about the men Christ called as disciples, both from this passage and from independent study? (*Basically we find the disciples aren't superheroes. Many of them had issues and some stood in direct opposition to each other. We see in these twelve a picture of the future characteristics and struggles of all Christians.*)
- Breakdown of the text: Mark 3:13 – What specifically is Jesus doing in this verse? (*For today's lesson, emphasis the idea that Jesus called them.*)
- Is there any significance in the idea that Christ here initiated the calling? Why or why not? (*Allow discussion. Obviously there is significance, but give the group time to discuss this. There are several talking points you can hit on to guide the conversation:*
 - In this time pupils sought out the rabbis and teachers, not the other way around
 - The idea that Christ – the perfect God – comes to sinners and asks them to follow Him shows His gracious nature
 - It is not by human effort or distinction, but God's will that we are able to serve Him
 - It is when Man tries to find God on our own terms and by our own effort that distorted religion begins to happen
- What are other Biblical examples of God initiating the call for people to follow him? (*John 16:15-19; Adam and Eve – God pursued them even as they hid from Him; Abraham; Moses; God even approached Cain and gave him an opportunity to repent in Gen. 4:6-7*)

- What should our response to this be? (*Gratitude. Despite our pride wanting to think we pursue God, the Bible shows constantly that only if God reveals Himself can man know Him. Over and over, God is the seeker/pursuer, but man is running away. We must keep this gratitude for our calling at the root of everything that we do. When we lose this, the Christian life becomes a burden. Paul said he was "compelled by love of Christ to make Him known."*)

Foundations Session Fourteen

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson covers the idea that the twelve disciples – as well as Christian's today – are called by one greater than themselves?*

Review:

- Does anyone remember the lesson last week? *(I wasn't here! I want to make sure everything was covered!)*

Lesson:

- Has anyone heard of Socrates? What can you tell me about him?
- Does anyone know about any of Socrates' notable students?
- Use chalkboard – show progression of Socrates' ideas and how they evolved ...
- Many scholars say that Socrates was one of the major influences in the Western world. Without getting into the substance of his teaching, how is Jesus' relationship with his disciples different than that of Socrates to Plato?
- **Text:** Mark 3:13-15 – Re-read vs. 13 – emphasis that Jesus called and then the disciples came to Him. Throughout scripture, Jesus is calling, designating, sending and others are responding. Why is this significant?
- When Jesus called – people stopped what they were doing to follow Him. Now let me ask you this, and please answer - if you were in a boat helping your father as Peter was ... or in modern time, you are at work under the direct supervision of your boss, what type of event could convince you to just get up and leave? Who would have to be calling you? *(George Bush vs. Chris Mula) (KB invites to lunch)*
- When you look around today, do you think the church as a whole emphasizes Jesus as Savior or Jesus as Lord? How can this affect our response to Him? *(We reject the person but accept the function. We like the benefits, but not the cost. Think of a father. A father can also be a friend, but a cannot just be a friend!)*
- So yeah – Jesus is important. He's the Lord. We're taught this from the day we're saved – since our very first days in Sunday school. Now ... how can we take this past a typical Sunday school lesson and make it something practical? *(Disciples got in trouble for serving a different Lord than the Romans!)*

Foundations Session Fifteen

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson covers the idea that our calling is personal. Christ calls each person individually and calls “those that He [wants].”*

Review:

- We are covering the six realities of Christ’s calling. First, we looked at the idea that Christ initiates the calling of all believers. Then, we studied the idea that we are called by one greater than ourselves. This week, we will continue to study Mark 3:13-19 to learn about our individual callings based on how Christ called His disciples.

Lesson:

- **Text:** Mark 3:13-19 – In verse 13, we see Jesus going up on the mountain and calling people to Him. What is the exact phrasing used to describe those He called? (*“Those He wanted” – NIV*)
- Can you describe a time in your life where you wanted to spend time with someone? What made you want to be with that person?
- In this passage, we are taking Christ’s calling of the disciples and viewing our own calling in light of it. If, when Christ called the first twelve, He called those that He wanted, what does that mean for our own personal calling? (*What does the idea that Christ wants you – desires your company – do to your religion?*)
- Notice also that Christ did not just call the group, but called specific people that the Bible mentions by name. Why is this significant? (*Each disciple had to make his own personal response. This was no group thing – it required individual action from each person.*)
- How did you respond when Christ called you? What are some decisions you had to make? Does your faith change the way that you live?
- Do you think there is a danger that some people may enjoy the fellowship, experience, and support of the Church but still do not have a personal relationship with Christ – one in which they have responded to His personal call? Have any of you struggled with this?
- What are some practical, measurable, ways that – starting today – we can encourage people to respond their personal invitation to follow Christ? (*Remember that 2 Peter 3:9; 1 Timothy 2:4; John 3:16 and other scriptures make clear this personal invitation is indeed extended to all people.*)

Foundations Session Sixteen

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson covers the idea that we are called to intimacy with Christ.*

Review:

- What have we been talking about? (*The realities of Christ's calling. What it means to truly be called to a relationship with Christ.*)

Lesson:

- Your response to this question: Do Christians go to church because they love God or because they are afraid of going to Hell?
- **Text:** Mark 3:13-15 – Hope you aren't getting tired of this scripture yet! This week, emphasis on the "middle half" of vs. 14 – "that they might be with Him." In other words – intimacy. We are called into an intimate relationship.
- What does intimacy mean? Does it convey something more than "personal"?
- Is intimacy different than an emotion? If so, how?
- There are two sides to spiritual intimacy –
- **Text:** Proverbs 1:7 – What is this scripture speaking to? Why is "fear" important to intimacy?
- **Text:** Duet. 6:5 – What does this verse really mean?
- How do we know if we are living a life of legitimate intimacy with Jesus? (*John 14:15-24*)

Foundations Session Seventeen

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson covers the idea that Christ's call comes with a purpose. We aren't to look at our call as an endpoint, but as the beginning of a long mission.*

Review:

- What have we been talking about? (*The realities of Christ's calling. What it means to truly be called to a relationship with Christ. Last week we talked about Christ's calling us to an intimate relationship.*)

Lesson:

- Do any of you have “that person” in your life what when you see their number on your caller ID, you know you are about to have some work to do? OR you know something fun but interesting is about to happen? (*Monday nights with Ryan Hutchinson*)
- In a way, I think we should see our life with Christ – His calling upon us – with this same sense of knowing *something* is about to happen. We should look at His call as being one where we are about to do some work.
- **Text:** Mark 3:13-15 – This week specifically focus on “that [H]e might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons.”
- Set the background: Christ calls us FIRST to an intimate relationship with Him THEN to do some work. Why is it important to get this in the correct order?
- Now, based on what we read in our passage, what are some of the aspects of the mission Christ has for us?
 1. Minister through communication! (*preach*)
 - **Matt. 12:34b** – This challenges me.
 - Suppose you live down the street from a genuinely nice Mormon, a genuinely nice Muslim, and a genuinely nice Atheist. How can our neighbors know the truth?
 2. Minister in authority!
 - What does it mean to minister in authority?
 - **2 Corinthians 5:20** – What does an earthly ambassador do?
 3. Minister of deliverance!
 - This refers to driving out darkness of any type. Means everything from exorcism to just plain speaking the truth. Why is this difficult?
 - How can we overcome the spirit of “tolerance”?
- Do you think the American church as a whole gets this “purpose” or understand our mission? If not, what do you think the perceived “purpose” or mission of the American church is? How can we help fight that?

Foundations Session Eighteen

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson covers the idea that Christ's calls us to a transformed identity.*

Review:

- What have we been talking about? (*The realities of Christ's calling. What it means to truly be called to a relationship with Christ. Last week we talked about Christ's calling being full of purpose.*)

Lesson:

- As I list the following names, tell me what you associate with each of them: Michael Jordan, Hulk Hogan, Babe Ruth, Tom Hanks, Elvis Presley, Abraham Lincoln, Billy Graham, Bill Cosby, Mark Twain, Paul
- These are all individuals whose very name defines a genre – great sports figures, actors, musicians, writers, political figures, preachers – their names are synonymous to their profession.
- What is it about a name that is significant? Besides these “famous” individuals, are there people in your life, that when you think of their name, you think of _____? Examples?
- **Text:** Mark 3:13-19, emphasis on “designating them to be apostles”
- When Christ called these men to be apostles, it wasn't like picking them for His team in P.E. class. He was giving them a title – a new designation – a new name (some literally got a new name). Why is this important? What do you think a change of name represents? (*Apostle meant “Sent One” – that is who they were. It defined not only what people called them, but the task they had to do here on earth*)
- In several places in the Bible, God changes people's names. Which one's can you think of and why was it important? (*Abram to Abraham – the names means “father of many” or “exalted father.” He was childless. His new name was a promise. Jacob – he who deceives – was renamed Israel – “he who is a prince with God” or “one who wrestles with God.”*)
- What is it that makes certain people known for certain things? (*It's about passion – what you love naturally flows out of you. When you are in love with something, it causes you to do something, which in turn causes you to be known for doing something*)

Foundations Session Nineteen

Discussion Format

Goal: *This lesson covers the Biblical concept of Faith.*

Review:

- What have we been talking about to this point?

Lesson:

- How does our culture view faith? What about you personally – what does faith mean to you?
- **Faith defined:** Noun – “The Faith” – the composite revelation of the Gospel: everything about Christ. His birth, life, and death. Verb – always used in relation to a person who trusts in something.
- **Text:** Proverbs 3:5 – What does it mean to “trust”? How are some ways we might lean on our own understanding? Why is this bad? (*Everyone has faith in something – and that faith shapes their world view. Everyone interprets events based on what they believe in. That is why it is important to seek out truth instead of just accepting what we are taught.*)
- **Text:** Genesis 3:1 – How is the serpent tempting Eve? (*Satan does not attack the idea of God, but attacks the relationship between God and Man. Many times the battle is not over God’s existence, but over our ability to trust. Victor.*)
- All men/women have a spiritual need for two things – *Security and Significance*. How can these spiritual needs draw us closer to God? What are some ways we attempt to fill these needs away from God?
- Do you think it is possible to “have faith” without “being saved”?
- **Text:** James 2:14, Isaiah 29:13 (*These vs. speak to the idea that we need a repentant faith, not just an intellectual assent without commitment to the person of Jesus or true repentance. Again – Satan’s attack not against the idea of God, but against our relationship with Him.*)
- **Text:** John 15:4, John 8:31 – What do these vs. speak to concerning faith? (*Faith is something we “remain” and “hold on” to. It’s not religious magic, but hard work and obedience.*)
- How can we know if we have true faith? (*1 John 3:6-10, 2 Timothy 3:5. Also, true faith leads to freedom from anxiety, the Fear of Man, and the Fear of death.*)