#### BACK TO THE BASICS

READING PLAN AND STUDY GUIDE



SUMMER 2021

Good Fundamentals.
Solid Foundations.
Reading, Writing and Arithmetic.
The Basics.

Sometimes the basic things seem so simple that we take them for granted. But every discipline requires a firm grasp of the basics. Discipleship - the discipline of following Jesus - is no different. We must be securely grounded in the basics if we are to flourish as his disciple.

The way of a disciple is countercultural to our world and counterintuitive to our flesh. Even for those who already understand and practice them, it is sometimes helpful to review the basics of the Christian Faith to make sure we don't lose them in the complexities of life and doctrine.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY IS TO STRENGTHEN EVERY DISCIPLE IN THE FUNDAMENTALS OF FOLLOWING JESUS.

We want to help you firmly grasp the basics from the word of God. If you are a newer believer or have never been established in these truths, then diligently pursue new understanding and application. If you have been a believer for a long time, this will serve to test your own understanding and practice, and will equip you to disciple newer believers in the faith.

In this 12-week reading plan, you will find 5 passages per week related to the topic at hand, giving you opportunity to spend daily time with God. On the opposite page, you will find a more extensive study in one of those passages. In any reading of God's word, use good study methods, seeking to prayerfully "observe, interpret and apply." At the same time, understand and savor the fact that this is time with your Creator and Savior: he is with you and he has spoken.

We pray this study facilitates a season of strengthening and growth in your walk with Christ as we go "back to the basics." URPOSE OF THIS STUDY

> Strengthening every disciple in the fundamentals of following Jesus.

WEEK 1 GOD'S BIG
PLAN OF
LOVE



One of the most basic privileges of following Jesus is that we get to spend focused time with the One who made us and sustains us. There is nothing more important than to hear from God in his word and depend upon him in prayer!

### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about God's loving plan to redeem a people for himself:

- John 3:16-21
- 1 John 3:1-21
- Deuteronomy 7:6-11
- Isaiah 63:7-14
- Romans 5:6-21

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: John 3:16-18

## STUDY AND DISCUSS THE DEPTHS OF GOD'S SAVING LOVE:

Read all of John 3:16-21 and answer the following questions:

1) v. 16. – What are some ways we use the word "world"? To what does the word "world" refer here?

2) v. 16-17 - How much did God love "the world"? What is the extent of his love? How does reading about *his* heart affect *your* heart?

3) v. 16-18 - What are some ways we use the word "believe"? What does it mean to "believe in him" in these verses? What is the result of that belief (cross-reference Rom. 8:1)?

4) v. 18–21 – What is the result of not believing? How can this result come from a loving God?

# G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

J O H N 3:16-21

MAKE IT PERSONAL: Have you believed this loving God and his work to save? What difference does that make in your life?

WEEK 2 THE LAW:
LOVE GOD,
LOVE OTHERS



One of the most basic privileges of following Jesus is that we get to spend focused time with the One who made us and sustains us. There is nothing more important than to hear from God in his word and depend upon him in prayer!

### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about Loving God and Loving Others:

- Matthew 22:34-40
- Luke 10:25-37
- Deuteronomy 6:1-25
- Exodus 20:1-21
- Galatians 5:13–15

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: Matthew 22:36-40

## STUDY AND DISCUSS THE GREAT COMMANDMENT:

Read all of Matthew 22:34-40 and answer the following questions:

1) v. 34-36 - Read the context in v. 15-33. Why do the religious leaders want to test Jesus? What does this reveal about their hearts?

2) v. 37–38 – What does it mean to "love the Lord your God"? Why does the scripture instruct us to love God with all our "heart, soul, and mind" (also "might" in Deut. 6) instead of simply saying "love God"?

3) v. 38, 40 - Cross-reference Deut. 6:4-5. Why does Jesus consider loving God "the first and greatest commandment"? How does this affect our understanding of obeying God's commands?

4) v. 39-40 - Cross reference these verses with Galatians 5:13-15. What is the relationship between loving God and loving others? In what sense does "love of neighbor" fulfill the whole law? What does this love practically look like?

# G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

MATTHEW 22:34-40

MAKE IT PERSONAL:
What does it look like
to love God in your
life this week?
What "neighbor" has
God given you to love
this week?

WEEK 3 THE GOSPEL:
SAVED BY
GRACE
THROUGH
FAITH



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### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about the gospel of God's amazing grace:

- Ephesians 2:1-10
- Titus 2:11-14
- 1 Corinthians 15:1-11
- Romans 1:16-17
- Romans 3:21-26

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: Ephesians 2:8-10

## STUDY AND DISCUSS THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S GLORIOUS GRACE:

Read all of Ephesians 2:1-10 and answer the following questions:

- 1) v. 1–3 What does this passage say about everyone who does not put their faith in Jesus? What do these descriptions mean? Do you believe that this describes who you would be apart from Jesus?
- 2) v. 4-6 Who did the work to save us? What work did he do? Why was this work necessary?
- 3) v. 4, 7 The words "because" and "so that," are words of *purpose*. Why did God complete this saving work? What do these verses reveal about God's priorities in salvation?
- 4) v. 8-9 What is grace? What is faith? Why does God save us BY grace, THROUGH faith instead of saving us by our works?
- 5) v. 10 What is the result of God saving us? What are the "good works" that he has prepared for us? When did he prepare them?

# G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

E P H E S I A N S 2:1-10

MAKE IT PERSONAL:
Praise God for his
saving grace. As you
rely on this grace, to
what specific good
works is God calling
you in the next week,
month or year?

WEEK 4 BAPTISM:
DEAD TO
SIN,
ALIVE TO
GOD



One of the most basic privileges of following Jesus is that we get to spend focused time with the One who made us and sustains us. There is nothing more important than to hear from God in his word and depend upon him in prayer!

### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about the nature of baptism and union with Christ:

- Romans 6:1-11
- Colossians 2:6-15
- Acts 2:37-47
- Ephesians 4:1-7
- 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

**MEMORIZE:** Romans 6:5

#### STUDY AND DISCUSS THE NATURE OF BAPTISM:

Read all of Romans 6:1-11 and answer the following questions:

- 1) v. 1–2 Paul begins with an objection to the gospel of grace. What are some ways you've heard this objection raised today? How does Paul deal with this objection?
- 2) v. 3-4 Paul is speaking of the "baptism" of the Holy Spirit who unites us to Jesus. What does it mean that we have "died with Christ," been "buried with him" and are "raised with him"?
- 3) v. 3-4 The word "baptized" means to "put under water." What is the relationship between spiritual baptism (regeneration) and water baptism?
- 4) v. 5-6 What are some everyday examples of things or people who are fully "united" together? What does it mean to be *united* to Jesus Christ?
- 5) v. 7-11 What are some of the results of this union with Christ?

# G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

R O M A N S 6:1-11

MAKE IT PERSONAL:
Have you experienced
this union with Christ
through the Spirit in
your life? Have you
expressed that
through water
baptism? To what is
God calling you as a
result?

WEEK 5 THE NATURE
OF TRUE
REPENTANCE



One of the most basic privileges of following Jesus is that we get to spend focused time with the One who made us and sustains us. There is nothing more important than to hear from God in his word and depend upon him in prayer!

### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages that reveal the nature of true repentance:

- 2 Corinthians 7:10-13
- Luke 3:1-20
- 2 Samuel 12:1-14
- Psalm 51
- Psalm 73

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: 2 Corinthians 7:10

#### STUDY AND DISCUSS THE NATURE OF TRUE REPENTANCE:

Read all of 2 Corinthians 7:10-13 and answer the following questions:

1) v. 10 - Paul contrasts two types of grief over sin. What are those two types and what is the difference?

2) v. 11 - Describe and define the characteristics of their repentance that came from their godly grief?

3) v. 11 - Cross-reference Psalm 51, which is David's Psalm of repentance after committing adultery and murder. How do you see these characteristics of repentance in David's prayer?

4) v. 12–13 – Paul had confronted the Corinthian church about a particular sin in their midst in an earlier writing. How did this confrontation affect the church in Corinth and beyond? What does this reveal about the relationship between repentance and the church? (Cross–reference Matt. 18:15 and Gal. 6:1)

# G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

2 CORINTHIANS 7:10-13

MAKE IT PERSONAL:
Have you seen this
type of repentance in
your own life? Ask the
Lord to reveal if there
is a particular sin you
need to repent.

WEEK 6 IDENTITY IN
CHRIST



One of the most basic privileges of following Jesus is that we get to spend focused time with the One who made us and sustains us. There is nothing more important than to hear from God in his word and depend upon him in prayer!

### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about our identity in Christ and his benefits given to us:

- Galatians 4:1-7
- Romans 8:1-17
- Romans 8:18-30
- Romans 8:31-39
- Ephesians 1:3–14

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: Galatians 4:4-5

#### STUDY AND DISCUSS THE IDENTITY OF BEING AN HEIR WITH CHRIST THROUGH ADOPTION:

Read all of Galatians 4:1-7 and answer the following questions:

1) v. 1–3 – Paul illustrates our identity in Christ using the Roman practices surrounding inheritance. Heirs could not receive their inheritance until the appointed time. Not only that, they are placed under "guardians," and have similar rights to a slave. According to this verse who are the guardians and managers of people before they are saved? What is meant by "elementary principles of the world" (see also Col. 2:8)? In what way do they "enslave us"?

2) v. 4-5 - What did God do to redeem those under the law? What is the relationship between the law and the "elementary principles" above?

3) v. 6-7 - What does it mean to be "adopted"? What is the *primary* benefit of this adoption?

4) v. 6-7 - Cross-reference Romans 8:12-17 and Ephesians 1:3-14. What are some of the secondary benefits of being an heir through adoption?

# RASPING THE BASICS

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G A L A T I A N S 4:1-7

MAKE IT PERSONAL:
Which benefit of being an heir with Christ is hardest for you to believe? Which benefit is most comforting?
Remind yourself of these daily for the next month.

WEEK 7-WALKING BY THE SPIRIT



One of the most basic privileges of following Jesus is that we get to spend focused time with the One who made us and sustains us. There is nothing more important than to hear from God in his word and depend upon him in prayer!

### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about walking by the Spirit and putting sin to death:

- Galatians 5:16-26
- Colossians 3:1-18
- Ephesians 4:17-32
- Ephesians 5:1-21
- John 16:7-15

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: Galatians 5:22-23

#### STUDY AND DISCUSS THE DESIRES OF THE SPIRIT AND THE DESIRES OF THE FLESH:

Read all of Galatians 5:16-26 and answer the following questions:

1) v. 16–17 – What is the relationship between "the desires of the Spirit" and "the desires of the flesh"? What does the word "desire" tell us about the nature of sin?

2) v. 18-21 - Compare this list to the sin lists in Eph. 4:25-32, Eph. 5:3-5 and Col. 3:5-8. What is similar? What is different? What stands out? What does Paul say in each of these passages about the judgment of these desires?

3) v. 22-23 - Compare this list to the lists of virtues in Eph. 4:32 and Col. 3:12-14. What is similar? What is different? What does the word "fruit" in Gal. 5 tell us about the relationship of these virtues to the person of the Holy Spirit?

4) v. 24–26 – How is it possible to walk by the Spirit? What is necessary for this to happen?

# G RASPING THE BASICS

G A L A T I A N S 5:16-26

MAKE IT PERSONAL:
Do you see the desires
of the Spirit or the
Desires of the Flesh in
your daily interactions
with others? Ask God
to produce his fruit in
you by the Spirit.

WEEK 8-ABIDING THROUGH THE WORD AND PRAYER



One of the most basic privileges of following Jesus is that we get to spend focused time with the One who made us and sustains us. There is nothing more important than to hear from God in his word and depend upon him in prayer!

### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about abiding in Christ through the word and prayer:

- John 15:1-10
- John 8:31-47
- 1 John 2:1-17
- John 14:12-14
- Luke 11:1-13

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: John 15:7-8

#### STUDY AND DISCUSS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ABIDING, GOD'S WORD, AND PRAYER:

Read all of John 15:1-8 and answer the following questions:

1) v. 1-2, 5 - To "abide" means "to remain in CONSTANT awareness of, connection to, and dependence on the power and presence of Jesus." How does the analogy of the vine and branches help us understand this connection? What are the different parts of the analogy and to whom/what do they refer (vine, branches, vinedresser, etc.)?

- 2) v. 1, 6 What is the Father seeking? What happens if he doesn't find it?
- 3) v. 4–5 What produces fruit on the branches? Could a branch, disconnected from a vine, produce fruit? What does this mean about our ongoing relationship to Jesus?
- 4) v. 3, 7 Cross-reference John 8:31. What is the relationship between the words of Christ and abiding in Christ? What does it practically look like to abide in his word and have his word abide in us?
- 5) v. 7–8 Cross–reference John 14:12–14. What is the relationship between the word of God and prayer? What is the extent of things for which we can ask the Father?

# G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

J O H N 15:1-8

MAKE IT PERSONAL:
What habits will help
you remain in
CONSTANT awareness
of, connection to and
dependence on the
power and presence of
Jesus in the next
month?

WEEK 9-GOD'S DESIGN FOR FAMILY AND WORK



One of the most basic privileges of following Jesus is that we get to spend focused time with the One who made us and sustains us. There is nothing more important than to hear from God in his word and depend upon him in prayer!

### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about God's perfect design for family and work:

- Colossians 3:18-4:1
- Ephesians 5:22-6:9
- 1 Peter 2:13-3:7
- Titus 2:1-15
- Genesis 2:1-25

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: Colossians 3:18-21

#### STUDY AND DISCUSS GOD'S PERFECT DESIGN FOR FAMILY AND WORK:

Read all of Colossians 3:18-4:1 and answer the following questions:

1) 3:18–19 – How does this passage describe the relationship between husband and wife? What are some misconceptions about what these words mean, and what do they actually mean? How does this design for marriage compare to our culture?

2) 3:20–21 – What are God's primary concerns for the parent/child relationship? What are some ways families can get these things "out of order"?

3) 3:22-4:1 - Bondservants were a type of slave: they were either born into slavery or indentured to pay off a debt. They were considered part of the household and worked in exchange for needed provisions. They also could save and buy their freedom. In this working environment, Paul brings the dignity of God's design for work. What does he say about the focus of the bondservant/master? How does this transform each role? How can we apply this same focus today?

## G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

C O L O S S I A N S 3:18-4:1

#### MAKE IT PERSONAL:

What roles do you occupy in your household and/or workplace? According to these verses, what are your responsibilities in those roles? Ask God to empower you to fulfill his design for your life.

WEEK 10-THE CHURCH: WHAT AND WHY?



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### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about God's purpose and plan for his church (all of 1 Timothy):

- 1 Timothy 1:1-20
- 1 Timothy 2:1-15
- 1 Timothy 3:1-13
- 1 Timothy 3:14-4:16
- 1 Timothy 5:1-6:2
- 1 Timothy 6:3-20

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: 1 Timothy 3:16

#### STUDY AND DISCUSS GOD'S PERFECT DESIGN FOR FAMILY AND WORK:

Read all of 1 Timothy 3:14-16 and answer the following questions:

- 1) 14–15 Verse 14 tells us that Paul is giving his purpose statement for the whole letter to Timothy, and arguably for all the pastoral epistles (1–2 Timothy, Titus). What is his primary concern? According to the contents of the rest of this letter, what is meant by the word "behave"?
- 2) v. 15 The term "household" refers to a family. What are the implications of calling the church "the household of God"? How is this concept fleshed out through other scriptures?
- 3) v. 15 Paul clarifies that the household of God is "the church of the living God." What does this phrase add to our understanding of *what* the church is?
- 4) v. 15 The word "pillar" refers to a column that holds something up high, putting it on display. "Buttress" refers to a construction element designed to support structural integrity. With this in mind, in what way does the church serve as a "pillar of the truth" and "buttress of truth"?
- 5) v. 16 Paul further identifies "the truth" as "the mystery of godliness" which he then describes as a person using the lyrics of a hymn. Who is this person? In what sense is *HE* the mystery of godliness? How does this relate to the word "behave" in v. 15? What important elements of this mystery does this hymn include?

# G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

1 TIMOTHY 3:14-16

MAKE IT PERSONAL:
Do you understand how
the church is to
function? What role do
you play in helping the
church function as it
ought?

WEEK 11-LIVING IN THE WORLD, NOT OF IT



One of the most basic privileges of following Jesus is that we get to spend focused time with the One who made us and sustains us. There is nothing more important than to hear from God in his word and depend upon him in prayer!

### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about God's desire for our interactions in the world:

- Matthew 5:1-16
- 1 John 2:15-17
- John 17:1-26
- 1 Peter 2:9-12
- 1 Peter 3:8-22

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

MEMORIZE: Matthew 5:13-16

#### STUDY AND DISCUSS GOD'S DESIRE FOR OUR INTERACTIONS IN THE WORLD:

Read all of Matthew 5:1-16 and answer the following questions:

1) v. 1–11 – These verses are often referred to as "The Beatitudes because of the formula "blessed be."

The term "blessed" means "to be happy in the Lord's favor." In what ways are these descriptions of "blessedness" countercultural from the world and counterintuitive to our flesh?

2) v. 11–12 – Why might the world revile and persecute Jesus-followers? What type of response should this prompt in our hearts?

3) v. 13 – Jesus compares the "tastiness" of salt to his followers' presence in the world (cross-reference Col. 4:6). In what way do Christ-followers, living out the descriptions in v. 1–12, add "taste" to the world? How could we "lose our saltiness"?

4) v. 14-15 - What is our "light"? What is the effect of our light? How do our "good works" cause others to "give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (cross-reference 1 Peter 2:12)?

# G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

M A T T H E W 5:1-16

MAKE IT PERSONAL:
Do you see the blessing in following Jesus in these ways? Who needs to taste and see the work of Jesus in your life this week?

WEEK 12OUR PART IN
THE GLOBAL
MISSION OF
THE CHURCH



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### YOU CAN ORDER YOUR TIME LIKE THIS...

**PRAY** – Ask God to reveal himself through his scriptures.

**READ** – Pick ONE of the following passages about our participation in the global mission of the church:

• Colossians 4:2-6

• Matthew 16:13-20

• Matthew 28:16-20

• Philippians 1:3-10

• Philippians 4:10-20

#### PRAY -

He is Worthy: Based on the passage you read, praise God for who he is and what he has done.

We are Needy: Based on the passage you read, ask God for whatever you need in order to apply his word.

**MEMORIZE:** Colossians 4:5-6

#### STUDY AND DISCUSS OUR PART IN THE GLOBAL MISSION OF THE CHURCH:

Read all of Colossians 4:2-6 and answer the following questions:

- 1) v. 2 Paul uses the words "steadfast" and "watchful." What do these words tell us about the nature of prayer? Why is this type of prayer necessary?
- 2) v. 3 Paul invites the Colossian believers to participate in his ministry through prayer. Cross-reference Acts 13:3 and Acts 14:27. What does an "open door for the gospel" mean? What role does prayer play in this? What does this tell us about our role in the global advancement of the gospel?
- 3) v. 4 "To make it clear" involves removing confusion, but also speaking with boldness. Why might a missionary such as Paul need prayer for this?
- 4) v. 5-6 Paul immediately turns from his own ministry to the Colossian believers' ministry of evangelism, specifically in their deeds (walk) and words (speak... answer). Why are both deeds and words necessary?
- 5) v. 4–5 Paul can quickly pivot between their prayer for him and their own ministry of evangelism. What does this demonstrate about the relationship between local evangelism and global mission? How do we often get this relationship wrong?

# G R A S P I N G T H E B A S I C S

C O L O S S I A N S 4:2-6

#### MAKE IT PERSONAL:

Make a commitment to pray steadfastly for Oak Hill's global partners.
Also, seek open doors for clear, bold witness in your own sphere of influence.



a resource from oak hill fellowship church www.oakhillfellowship.com