

Chapter 1 : Philosophy of Ministry | Shepherd's Community Church | Lafayette Colorado

In 1Cor, Paul addresses three different aspects of Christian community. So far, he has addressed two important aspects of Christian community—meeting together (chapter 11) and spiritual gifts (chapter 12). Now in chapter 13, he reveals the foundation—biblical love. We're going to explore.

We encourage you to share these resources for educational purposes, but please do not reproduce or distribute these resources for sale. Biblical Basis for Discipleship Matthew And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. He is not waiting passively in heaven for His glorious arrival as king but already He is exercising His lordship. The literal translation is a command: This simply means an action that is absolutely required and occurring without end. It is surrounded by three participles Go, Baptize, and Teach. Jesus is communicating how the action of the finite verb is accomplished. The gospel is the catalyst for that initiation and thus the most relevant message that a person can receive in this life³. The focus is witnessing, so the task of baptizing in this text is mainly evangelistic in nature. By teaching what Jesus taught, the church becomes an extension of His ministry⁴. In all, the command to disciple finds its fulfillment in evangelism and education. The discipleship characteristics as commanded by Jesus appear not only in this commission, but throughout the Gospels. In fact, Jesus converted very few people in His earth ministry in a clear-cut way. He literally staked His whole ministry on twelve men. As popular as He was during His earthly ministry, Jesus did not focus on the momentary applause of men but quietly poured His life in those who would multiply. Jesus was not trying to impress the crowd, but usher in a kingdom. Christ expects His followers to be fruitful,⁶ but often we are not without external motivation and accountability. This is what we need in our churches. Early Church Model Although not in a methodical plan as what we are accustomed to today, the apostles of the early church believed the command of Jesus was indeed serious. One clear example is the life that Paul modeled as shown most beautifully in the exhortation given in 2 Tim. Paul understood it was important that Jesus sent him to do all that He had commanded. In the same way, he was sending Timothy. While being sent, Timothy is to continue the legacy by sending out faithful men out who would send others. This is what Jesus commanded Paul and this was his command to Timothy. The command is also extended to us today. We have seen that Jesus calls His followers to reproduce the example of training disciples to continue the mission of actively teaching and sharing the gospel. This will require long term investment but can create a deeply affecting ministry. So it appears that the call to discipleship is extended to the entire body of Christ and is no less relevant today than when it was first given. It should be a significant component in the body of Christ both theoretically and practically. Discipleship is a popular word, often used vaguely and ambiguously. Discipleship is the relationship between a teacher discipler and student disciple. Many churches and Christian groups around the world do elements of discipleship, but rarely engage in holistic discipleship as modeled by Christ. Discipleship is not fulfilled by any of the following items on their own:

Chapter 2 : Community and Mission | Biblical Foundations

The mission of Biblical Foundations is to help restore the biblical foundations for the family, the church, and society. In order to help believers defend biblical, historic Christianity, this site provides biblically based, theologically grounded, and missionally oriented resources on a variety of topics.

Who, which, what, that. The first person singular present indicative; a prolonged form of a primary and defective verb; I exist. Of Hebrew origin; Jesus, the name of our Lord and two other Israelites. Anointed One; the Messiah, the Christ. From chrio; Anointed One, i. The Messiah, an epithet of Jesus. Pulpit Commentary Verse Any "other" gospel is not merely "another," but "a different" gospel Galatians 1: That which is laid; rather, that is lying comp. Which is Jesus Christ. Matthew Henry Commentary 3: Spiritual pride is abominable; it is using the greatest favours of God, to feed our own vanity, and make idols of ourselves. But let every man take heed; there may be bad building on a good foundation. Nothing must be laid upon it, but what the foundation will bear, and what is of a piece with it. Let us not dare to join a merely human or a carnal life with a Divine faith, the corruption of sin with the profession of Christianity. Christ is a firm, abiding, and immovable Rock of ages, every way able to bear all the weight that God himself or the sinner can lay upon him; neither is there salvation in any other. Leave out the doctrine of his atonement, and there is no foundation for our hopes. But of those who rest on this foundation, there are two sorts. Some hold nothing but the truth as it is in Jesus, and preach nothing else. Others build on the good foundation what will not abide the test, when the day of trial comes. We may be mistaken in ourselves and others; but there is a day coming that will show our actions in the true light, without covering or disguise. Those who spread true and pure religion in all its branches, and whose work will abide in the great day, shall receive a reward. There are others, whose corrupt opinions and doctrines, or vain inventions and usages in the worship of God, shall be made known, disowned, and rejected, in that day. This is plainly meant of a figurative fire, not of a real one; for what real fire can consume religious rites or doctrines?

Chapter 3 : Lesson 7: The Solid Foundation (2 Peter) | racedaydvl.com

Biblical Foundations Related to Listening to the Community You must first complete Overview of Listening to the Community before viewing this Lesson Please purchase the course before starting the lesson.

It would be utterly tragic to spend your life on a path that you thought led to heaven, only to find out too late that you were wrong! And, since even Christians interpret the Bible in so many different ways, how can we know that our interpretation is correct? Even some who claim to be evangelical Christians say that we cannot know the exact meaning of Scripture. They would say that if you claim to know what the Bible says, you are dogmatic and arrogant. To claim that your view is the only right view is divisive. Can we know for sure that what the Bible says is true and that we are correct in our understanding of it? He wants to leave his readers with a solid foundation so that after he is gone, they will not be led astray by false teachers, who are already plaguing the churches. That solid foundation is the revealed Word of God. The central focus of all Scripture is the Lord Jesus Christ. The apostolic witness to Jesus Christ, which we now have in the New Testament, is one leg of the foundation of our faith. The other leg is v. Therefore, Peter tells us to pay attention to that word as a lamp shining in the dark, until Christ returns. Ironically, these verses challenge us with some difficult interpretive issues, so I will try to explain the text as we work through it, so that we can apply it correctly. We not only have the apostolic witness to Jesus as they saw Him on the mount of transfiguration 1: By extension, it applies to all of the Old Testament, since the Scriptures all tie together. But the idea is that the Old Testament prophecies about the coming day of the Lord are confirmed and clarified by the transfiguration, where the disciples saw a prophetic preview of Jesus in His glory. He thinks that Peter is saying that Scripture ranks even above his experience of seeing the transfigured Christ. He states Study Bible, *ibid*. They predicted His sufferings and the glory that would follow. So in this sense, the Old Testament prophetic word was made more sure. The transfiguration confirmed and clarified the truth that was there, but which they did not understand until after that experience. Before we leave this point, consider for a moment just some of the prophetic Scriptures with regard to Jesus Christ. The Messiah would be born of a virgin Isa. His ministry would be introduced by a forerunner, who would speak in the spirit and power of Elijah Mal. This was fulfilled, of course, in John the Baptist. Other prophecies speak of His ministry Isa. Psalm 22, written hundreds of years before crucifixion was known as a means of execution, describes His death on the cross. That psalm also describes the taunts of His accusers v. It mentions specifically v. As you know, He was crucified between two criminals, but buried in the tomb of a rich man. All of these, plus many more prophecies, were specifically fulfilled in the life of Jesus Christ. In it, he assigns probabilities to a number of biblical prophecies and then calculates the odds that these things could have happened by sheer chance. In one chapter, he takes just eight prophecies concerning Jesus Christ and uses very conservative estimates to determine how probable it is that anyone who might have lived from the time of those prophecies down to the present could have fulfilled them all. His answer is, 1 in How big is that number? To illustrate, Professor Stoner says pp. They will cover the entire state two feet deep. Now mark one of those silver dollars, stir it into the whole mix, blindfold a man and tell him he can go as far as he wants, but he has to pick just one. His chances of picking the marked silver dollar are the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing just these eight prophecies apart from divine inspiration and having them all come true in one man. He goes on to show that if you take 16 prophecies, the odds increase to 1 in , an unimaginably huge number. It would involve a ball of silver dollars extending 30 times as far as from the earth to the sun! Last fall, my son-in-law, his two boys, and I hiked to the end of the Lava Cave north of town. Even with my headlamp, I hit my head hard on one of the rocks. The Bible says that the world is like that. It is a morally dark place. There are many hazards where you can conk your head or fall into a pit. When we come to know Christ, the Bible becomes our light to show us how to live to please Him in view of His coming, so that we can avoid temptation and sin. The day dawning v. But it will be a time of terror and awful regret for those who have rejected Christ. But Peter clearly believed in the objective, bodily, personal return of Christ. So he probably means that now, in the darkness, the prophetic word shines to illumine our path. But when Jesus, the morning star, returns, we will

have the light of His presence so that we will no longer need the prophetic word. The One of whom the prophecies spoke will be with us personally, shining fully into our hearts. Are you living in light of His coming, when we all will stand before Him to give an account of how we have lived 2 Cor. We must interpret the Word correctly, because it is not the word of man, but the inspired Word of God 1: We must interpret the Word correctly 1: But, again we must deal with some interpretive problems in order to understand verse It has been interpreted in three main ways. First, the Roman Catholic Church uses verse 20 to teach that individuals are not permitted to interpret the Bible for themselves. Rather, they must depend on the official teaching of the church. The practical result of this has been that many Roman Catholics have never read or studied the Bible on their own. For many years, the Church opposed translating the Bible into the common languages of the people for fear that they would misinterpret it. So Catholics had to depend on the priests as the correct interpreters of Scripture. But this view reads into the text all sorts of things that are not there. The question is, is the church over the Word or is the Word over the church? Second, some understand the verse to be referring not to the interpretation of Scripture, but rather to its origin. It means to untie a knot or solve a puzzle. So it more likely refers to the proper interpretation of prophecy after it was given, not to originating the prophecy Schreiner, p. Scripture is not to be interpreted subjectively, according to my feelings or preferences, but rather, objectively, according to the meaning of the text. To interpret it according to your subjective feelings would be to twist the Scriptures, something that the false teachers were doing 2 Pet. So while Peter could be referring to the origination of Scripture the second view , because of his concern about the false teachers 2: For me, feels more like First, we must always interpret a text in light of its context. Second, the Bible interprets itself, especially, individual authors interpret themselves. If you let Paul in context interpret Paul on justification by faith and James in context interpret James on justification by works, they do not contradict each other. Third, interpret the Bible based on grammatical, linguistic, and historical considerations. Words mean something and languages put words together in structured ways. We must seek to determine what the text meant to the original author and readers in their historical setting before we ask how it applies to us in our culture. We must interpret the Word correctly because it is not our word, but the inspired Word of God 1: It is the word of the Sovereign of the universe, to whom we will give account. So we had better take care to understand it correctly and obey it completely! Verse 21 is one of the key verses explaining the inspiration of Scripture. Rather, they were moved or carried along by the Holy Spirit. Charles Hodge gives one of the best explanations Systematic Theology [Eerdmans], 1: They were in such a sense the organs of God, that what they said God said. Conclusion Have you ever watched footage of when they want to take down an old skyscraper? Engineers put dynamite at strategic places in the foundation. When they set it off, the building implodes. His very first temptation challenged Eve Gen. Evolution, which against all reason is accepted as fact in our public educational system, does away with the need to submit to the Almighty Creator. Yet, in spite of the attacks, the Word of God endures forever 1 Pet. It gives us a solid foundation on which to build our lives and to stake our eternity. Make sure you pay attention to it by spending consistent time reading and studying it. Be careful to interpret it correctly. Walk by the light that it gives you to avoid the pitfalls in this dark world. Then you will rejoice when the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. Application Questions Since Christians have so many different interpretations of the Word, how do we determine which are right and which are of primary importance? What should you say? How would you answer this charge?

Chapter 4 : A Definition of Biblical Community

The Holy Trinity, the imago dei, and our in-Christ life all provide the necessary foundations for a biblically based community, a community rooted in an understanding that every person's greatest need is to know God.

I think Scripture attests over and over again that the Christian life is not meant to be lived or cultivated in solitude. I recently revisited a sort of working definition of biblical community I came up with a few years ago. For me it all starts with one question: How do we move a group of students from merely a collection of disconnected people to a true, biblical community? When I think of biblical community, I automatically turned to Acts 2: Looking at these passages, we get such a great view of the young Jerusalem Church. Through their example, I think we see the amazing potential we have for developing real community. Desire To Follow Christ First and foremost, there has to be a desire and a commitment to actually grow as a follower of Christ. As we think about community, this starts with a commitment to grow in knowledge of God, with spiritual growth coming from the application of this knowledge. How would describe the level of desire your students have to follow Christ? What can you do to help grow this desire? Fellowship is the heart of community. Are your gatherings fostering fellowship? Is it enough to just meet with students formally? Or do you need to find ways to meet informally outside of your programmed meeting times? Accountability, Transparency, Generosity While there are probably other characteristics of community, here are three main ones I think we see: Transparency, Accountability, and Generosity. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. It grows out of community. I have to trust you. And you have to have my best interests in mind. Does your group value transparency and generosity? Your students may not have physical needs your group can meet, but they have other needs. Is your group a place where students can openly bring spiritual and emotional needs to their friends? Compassion Over all of these things flies the banner of compassion. Transparency, accountability, and generosity are all contrary to our human nature. The temptation is to sit in judgment of each other when we are transparent, or as we are being held accountable. I think the best expression of this is Galatians 6: If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. And ultimately, there can be no fellowship. Do you foster an environment of compassion in your group? The Goal And of course the goal of community is to grow together towards Christ-likeness. Well, there you have it. I wonder what you think? What did I miss? What would you add?

Chapter 5 : 20 Biggest Grant Making Foundations for Christian Organizations | Pastor's toolBox

Biblical Foundations of Ministry "But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine" (Titus 21) These foundational biblical principles are important realities that we stand on and minister in light of.

The question of what foundations to turn to for funding is one Christian ministries and churches ponder over all the time. There are of course various factors to consider. The degree of compatibility between your mission and the aims of a foundation remains the most important consideration. But at a time when foundation funding is declining, it helps to know which foundations are giving the most - along with knowing a little about their overall purpose, the kinds of Christian organizations they fund, and the kinds of programs that interest them. The following are the top 20 Christian grant funding sources in terms of funding generosity. Seeking to further the gospel of Jesus Christ, its funding territory is national. This is largely a donor advised fund. A donor-advised fund is a charitable giving vehicle administered by a third party and created for the purpose of managing charitable donations on behalf of an organization, family, or individual. A donor-advised fund offers the opportunity to create an easy-to-establish, low cost, flexible vehicle for charitable giving as an alternative to direct giving or creating a private foundation. NCF helps individuals and families plan their giving through such programs as the Legacy Fund after death giving. It advises them on asset giving cash, stocks, real estate, business interests, restricted securities and shows them how to balance income needs and estate planning goals through charitable trusts and charitable gift annuities. Having an international gift giving scope, the Ministries seeks to "provide spiritual and material assistance such as food, clothing, medicine, and Christian literature to needy people in various countries. The Ministries supports Amish, Mennonite, and other conservative Anabaptists as they minister to the physical and religious needs of people worldwide. It aids victims of war, famine, and natural disasters. The Nehemiah Corporation is a foundation out of Sacramento, California. Its mission is to facilitate "home ownership and asset development opportunities for diverse populations in underserved neighborhoods across the U. It supports Christian services and organizations that seek to spread the gospel around the world. It provides care, comfort, and emergency aid to the sick, the disabled, the homeless. It is also known for producing televised religious broadcasts for ministries that spread the gospel worldwide. The Barnabas Foundation is a foundation from Tinley Park, Illinois that supports its nearly member Christian ministries through planned giving and estate planning. Bulow Campbell Foundation is an independent foundation from Atlanta, Georgia. The foundation seeks to uplift "intellectual and spiritual life, preferably projects of a permanent nature or for capital funds. It gives anonymously to church-related agencies of the Presbyterian Church, but not to congregations. Johnson Foundation is an independent foundation in San Mateo, California that generally funds only educational programs in California and Virginia. Only Christian organizations seeking grants for education programs in these two geographic regions would be eligible for funding. The Rees-Jones Foundation, a family foundation based in Dallas, Texas, funds "programs that help improve the quality of life for the underserved of north Texas. It supports churches that seek to relieve hunger, and it provides medical care for the mentally and physically disabled, educational opportunities for youth, and affordable housing, shelter, and spiritual development for those left behind. The Poplar Foundation is an independent foundation that mostly gives within its base of Memphis and the metropolitan area. It funds mostly youth services and education. Ministries that focus on these two areas are eligible for funding. Christian agencies that provide health, human services, and education are likelier to receive funding from the foundation than those that do not. The Hope Christian Community Foundation is a Christian public charity community foundation in Memphis, Tennessee that "helps Christians share their wealth with others in the most thoughtful and efficient ways. It partners with churches to serve the community, administer church and donor-advised funds for church members, and offer a cash management pool. The Maclellan Foundation is a Chattanooga, Tennessee-based independent foundation. It gives internationally and nationally, stressing Chattanooga. It is the largest of a group of four family foundations that are committed to "fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ through strategic giving. The New York City-based American Bible Society is a foundation that translates, publishes, and distributes the Bible in every language it can. The National

Endowment Association is a public charity in Princeton, Indiana that helps small to mid-sized charities in the United States, mostly religious ministries, endow funds. The objective is to free ministries from the constant demands of fundraising so they can devote more time to their missions. The association helps them solicit long-term planned gifts, something the larger charities already have the means to do. It helps them tap into larger funding sources through tax-exempt planning. The Norcliffe Foundation is an independent foundation in Seattle, Washington. It gives to organizations that benefit the arts and cultural organizations, hospitals, early childhood development, higher and secondary education, and historic preservation. It also supports medical research and health associations, hospices, the environment and conservation, and social services that include programs for the disabled, the homeless, child welfare, youth agencies, and the aged. It gives mostly in the Puget Sound area of Washington, especially in Seattle. It supports nonprofit institutions, communities, and organizations that support research, medical, health, educational, sports, social services, and artistic programs in communities across the nation. Christian organizations that work in any of these areas are eligible for funding. The Trust provides grants that help start new ministries or new programs or expand current programs. It funds organizations that are creative, accountable, stable, and effective. It also funds Christian programs that provide housing, food, medical assistance, and education for the poor. It may also support medical research in different areas. It mostly funds faith-based entrepreneurial programs, especially one-one-one mentoring. It gives nationally and internationally to Christian organizations that further its mission of translating, interpreting, and publishing the Bible. Its goal is to give more and more people throughout the world the opportunity to experience the Bible. Others lack a direct connection to Christianity but work to solve problems that are at the core of Christian concern. Some have a limited geographic focus; others have a national focus; still others have an international focus. But wherever your organization operates, and whatever programs it has, many if not most of these foundations are viable funding possibilities for your organization. And there are countless other possibilities.

Chapter 6 : Bible Foundation - Bible Ministry Resources

Immerse: In God's Word and Your Neighborhood | Introduction. Previous; Next; Overview of Introduction; Biblical Foundations: Immerse Introduction; Fresh Perspectives (Practitioner Stories with Founders of CCDA).

M4A Introduction In 1Cor. So far, he has addressed two important aspects of Christian communityâ€™ meeting together chapter 11 and spiritual gifts chapter Now in chapter 13, he reveals the foundationâ€™ biblical love. Its supreme importance Paul bookends this chapter by emphasizing the supreme importance of having a life that is characterized by biblical love. He gives two reasons: Paul is saying that being able to love is supremely important because it is the definition of a successful spiritual life: Even faith and hopeâ€™ so crucially important in this lifeâ€™ will not be needed then because we will see God and therefore our ultimate hope will be realized. But love will endure forever because love is the essence of who God is, and of who God created us to be. If the Bible said this only in 1Cor. But it says this over and over again. If your 1 goal as a Christian is anything other than to become a mature, effective lover of others, you are way off-course! Do you really believe this? If you do, then it becomes super-important to know what biblical love looks like. Its distinctive features This is not a comprehensive description of biblical love. Rather, Paul here is focusing especially on aspects of biblical love that the Corinthians lacked. They are the same two forms that were common in the first-century Greco-Roman culture. They named these two forms of love eros and philia. By contrast, the New Testament authors never use eros and use philia only 25 times 32 including philadelphia. Instead, they use agape, a word very rarely used by Greco-Roman authors, times Paul uses it five times in 1Cor. Scholars agree that the New Testament authors, by using agape this way, were intentionally saying: Eros love is the passion to possess an object of value, worth, or beauty. It is rooted in our emotions, and it requires a desirable object. Does this sound familiar? It is also at the root of mystical religions, which are quests for intense spiritual experiences. Eros love is very intense, but also very fickle and unstable. Corrupted eros becomes addictive lust. Marriage in America is in trouble in large part because it is excessively dependent upon eros. This is how God loves us read Rom. In fact, while eros loves admires an object because of its value, agape redeems creates value in its object because of its love EXAMPLE. Philia love is the love we have for people like usâ€™ it is rooted in familiarity and natural affinity. Philia therefore tends to be stable, but narrow in scope. The Bible speaks favorably of philia in a number places. But agape love is fundamentally different from philia in that it reaches out to and welcomes those who are very different fromâ€™ even hostile toâ€™ the lover. Jesus was vilified by religious Jews and frustrated His own disciples because He reached out to women, ostracized Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles. Christians are therefore to reach out both to other Christians people who are different from them Rom. With this basic contrast, we can add some other key distinctive features of agape love. Whereas eros derives joy from receiving, agape derives joy from being a giver Acts Whereas philia invests only in those for whom it feels affection, agape chooses to invest until it feels affection. The following additional aspects of agape are really different aspects of sacrificial love. Agape is deeply moral and realistic about the reality of sin. It abhors sin as the cancer of the soul, and it delights in righteousness 1Cor. It chooses to lay down the right to take retribution and instead absorb the debt caused by sin 1Cor. By contrast, neither eros nor philia are very realistic about or forgiving of sin. But when the sin is bad enough, both will reject the sinner. It is willing to correct and confront and enact painful consequences and even risk rejection â€™ not to get even or to control, but to influence the loved one away from what is destructive and toward what is true and right Mk. It recognizes that the loved one has a variety of needs e. He grasped the hand of the leper as He healed him to meet his emotional needs. No need is too menial for me to meet, nor too difficult for me to try to meet. It operates on the basis of freedom. It gives voluntarily not out of compulsion , and it gives without strings. It offers, but does not impose or manipulate as eros and philia often do. Jesus laid His life down for us freely and voluntarily, not because He had to Jn. He offers us forgiveness as a free gift, not as a wage that we earn Eph. And He gives us the freedom to reject His offer Rev. Agape is like a magnificent diamond, each facet beautiful and profound in its own right, yet also inter-related in ways that contribute to the greater beauty and profundity of the whole. Can you imagine what this world would be like if everyone loved this way? Can

you imagine what your life would be like if you could love people this way? How to develop it 1Cor. The first key is: Admit that there is no human source of agape love. You cannot originate it to give to others. No other person can originate it to give to you. Unless you are willing to accept this, you have no chance! The second key is: John says we must do this in two steps: This means to agree with God from your heart that Jesus is the only way to God, and to bow to Him as your personal Savior. The moment that you do this, you become united forever with God and His love permanently indwells your heart through His Spirit. Have you made this decision? Second, we have to continue to understand and rely on this love that God has for us 1Jn. We rightfully spend a lot of our teachings on how to do this. The third key is: Practice giving this love to others. You have to keep receiving it from God, and you have to keep giving it to others—like a branch keeps drawing sap from the vine and giving it away to form the fruit. As you keep doing this, the fruit your ability to love others gradually grows. Agape love-giving develops primarily in the context of Christian community—Christians building Christ-centered friendships in which each person is focused on love-giving. This is why you need to get involved in a home group. This is also the context in which you can learn from more mature love-givers. This is the context in which you can become a better lover in marriage, as a parent, at work, etc. They did not have patience with each other in the assembly Word Books, , p.

Chapter 7 : Call to Family Community and Participation

Biblical Foundations is designed to be a one-on-one Bible study intended to deepen your love for Jesus Christ by helping ground you in foundational concepts of the Christian faith. It is simply amazing to stop and realize that God has chosen to reveal Himself to us.

The Church transcends the contingent facts of this world, yet at the same time is deeply connected to historical events, for its very foundation is rooted in the centrality of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. The Christian view of history is a vision and interpretation of time in terms of eternity and of human events in the light of divine revelation. Christianity is the dynamic element in the history of our Western culture. The life of Jesus Christ, the birth of Christianity, and the Apostolic Age the first years speak for themselves, for great historical movements do not spring from non-events. The links and references provide a more in-depth discussion of each topic. Upon their return, the Holy Family settled in Nazareth, where Jesus grew and spent his childhood and early years as an adult. Hardly anything is known of his life at that time except that he was called a Nazarene Matthew 2: Jesus of Nazareth began his public ministry when he was about thirty years old. He spent much of his ministry by the Sea of Galilee, preaching in such towns as Capernaum John 6: When his hour came near, he headed toward Jerusalem Luke 9: Jesus often taught in parables, an ancient Eastern literary genre. A parable is a narrative that presents comparisons to teach an important moral lesson. Jesus performs many miracles, demonstrating his power over nature and spirits, and thus confirming that the Kingdom of God is at hand Mark 1: In a physical miracle, such as making the blind see, or walking on water, or calming a storm, the laws of the universe are suspended through divine intervention. In a moral miracle, such as forgiveness of sins or driving out demons, the blessing of Jesus purifies the spirit. Only three miracles appear in all four Gospels - his own Resurrection, the greatest miracle of them all, the healing of the blind, and the feeding of the through the multiplication of the loaves. His public ministry lasted about three years, prior to his Passion, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension. Jesus taught transformation of the inner person. His mission was one of love, mercy, and peace John Christ Jesus is the fulfillment of salvation history and the mediator and fullness of all revelation. See our home page Jesus Christ for further discussion. Following the Resurrection, Matthias was chosen to replace Judas Iscariot. Prior to his Ascension, Jesus commissioned his disciples to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth Acts 1: This strengthened the Apostles to spread the word of Christ Jesus. The Acts of the Apostles describes the infancy period of the Church, a time following the Pentecost when Christianity spread like wildfire. The Apostles all gathered in Jerusalem Acts 15 to discuss whether Gentiles who had been converted to Christianity had to observe all the ceremonial precepts of the Mosaic Law. This gathering of the Apostles became known as the Council of Jerusalem, and set the pattern of future Councils to resolve issues that arose within the Church. To the question of Jesus, "Who do you say that I am? Whereupon Jesus responded, "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" Matthew Peter became the first Patriarch of Antioch and ultimately Bishop of Rome. Saul persecuted the Church and consented to the death of the first martyr Stephen. He had men and women who lived the Way thrown into prison. But while going to Damascus, Saul was struck from his horse by a great light and a voice asked "Why do you persecute me? Christ identified himself with his Church: He then traveled to Arabia, and then returned to Damascus, where he remained for three years Galatians 1: Paul, as Apostle to the Gentiles, became just as passionate spreading Christianity as he was in persecuting Christians before his conversion. Peter was crucified upside down and St. Paul was beheaded, both probably in AD. In fact, all of the Apostles were martyred for having preached the Gospel, except for St. Heeding the message of Jesus Christ to Go therefore and make disciples of all nations Matthew Andrew evangelized Byzantium, appointed Stachys Romans James, the son of Zebedee and brother of John, is believed to have preached in Spain; he is the only Apostle to have his martyrdom recorded in the Bible Acts John, the son of Zebedee and the brother of James, was the "one Jesus loved. Christ on the Cross entrusted his mother Mary to John He played an important role as head

of the Church of Jerusalem, and writer of the Letter of James in the Bible. According to the historian Flavius Josephus, he was stoned to death in 62 AD. Thomas traveled through Chaldea and Persia all the way to India! Little is known about Simon the Zealot or Matthias. The Apostolic Fathers were a group of early Christian writers who knew one of the Apostles and lived about AD, and sought to define, organize, and defend the faith, such as Ignatius of Antioch, Clement of Rome, Polycarp of Smyrna, and the authors of the Didache. Ignatius of Antioch was designated Bishop of Syria by St. Peter on his trip to Antioch to meet St. Ignatius was the first to use the term Catholic Church in his Letter to the Smyrnaeans. The word catholic means universal and refers to the universal Church of Jesus Christ. Ignatius of Antioch would not worship the Emperor Trajan, and thus was placed in chains and martyred in Rome when thrown to the lions in the Coliseum. He wrote seven letters on his trip to Rome, which proved to be a unifying event for all of the early Churches. He established the Church hierarchy of bishop, priest, and deacon for the early Churches, the pattern which still exists today. In his First Apology written in , he described the Memorial of the Last Supper on Sunday, one that would be called the Divine Liturgy in the East and the Mass in the West, an event which has remained essentially the same for nearly years. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these, but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Savior, having been made flesh by the Word of God The Eastern Christian Churches are characterized by a rich heritage with Apostolic origin, and are treasured by the universal Church, for the East was the home of Jesus Christ our Redeemer! Jerusalem is the birthplace to all of Christianity throughout the world. The Levant, the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, served as the cradle of Christianity. Antioch, Syria became an early center for Christianity, especially following the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Indeed, followers of Christ were first called Christians in Antioch Acts They also became known as Nazarenes Acts Mark the Evangelist founded the Church of Alexandria, Egypt. Eusebius of Caesarea in his Ecclesiastical History reported that King Abgar of Edessa was afflicted with illness and contacted Jesus in the hope of a cure. Upon his healing by St. Jude Thaddeus, King Abgar converted to Christianity. Edessa became home to such writers as St. Ephrem wrote his beautiful hymns and religious poetry in Syriac, a dialect of the Semitic language of Aramaic, the language of Jesus. Syriac became the biblical and liturgical language of early Christian Churches in the East. The theology of Eastern Churches often developed independently, outside the sway of Roman and Byzantine thought. Eastern Christian Churches allow clerical marriage, for they accept the gift of human sexuality given by God, who said, "It is not good for the man to be alone" Genesis 2: But their powerful witness through martyrdom only served to spread Christianity! Constantine became Emperor of the West in As he was in Gaul at the time, he still had to capture Rome where Maxentius held sway. Welcome relief from Christian martyrdom came with the Edict of Milan in , through which Constantine and Licinius, the Emperor of the East, granted Christianity complete religious tolerance. His defeat of Licinius in made him sole Emperor of the entire Roman Empire, and he moved the seat of the Empire to Byzantium in and renamed it Constantinople. Constantine considered himself Christian and did much to protect and support Christianity. He restored property that once belonged to Christians. Christianity remain undivided until mankind sought to define the hidden nature of God and the mystery of Christ. A dispute concerning the relation of the Father and the Son arose in Egypt known as the Arian controversy. The Nicene Creed was expanded and finalized at the Council of Constantinople in to include homoousios for the Holy Spirit as well, by quoting John Constantine considered himself both head of state and father of the Christian Churches. There were eight named writers of the New Testament: The Tradition of the Fathers of the Church was important to early Christianity, for they were the ones who chose those inspired books which best reflected the life and teachings of Jesus Christ in the formation of the canon of the New Testament, and were also involved in the interpretation of Scripture. Jerome that "Matthew put together the sayings of the Lord in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as best he could" Papias, in Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, III, 39, Jerome was commissioned by Pope Damasus in to produce a new Latin translation of the Bible. Jerome completed the translation of the Greek New Testament into Latin in , and finished his translation from both Greek and Hebrew manuscripts of the Old Testament by In view of his work, St. Jerome was named the Father of Biblical Scholars. The Latin Vulgate Bible published by St. Jerome served as the standard Bible for Western Christian civilization for over years. He was born in Tagaste,

near Hippo, in north Africa. Monica was a devout Christian and taught him the faith. However, when he studied rhetoric in Carthage, he began living a worldly life. He obtained a post as master of rhetoric in Milan, accompanied by an unnamed woman and child Adeodatus, born out of wedlock in The woman soon left him and their son, and Monica joined them in Milan.

Chapter 8 : Who Wrote John's Gospel? | Biblical Foundations

The following are a few key biblical foundations, ministry purposes, and benefits of small groups. Biblical Basis for Small Groups God himself is in a community of three persons in oneâ€”the Father, Son, and Holy Spiritâ€”who exist in perfect unity.

Chapter 9 : HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY

This chapter introduces the concepts and principles of community health, explains how community health differs from personal health, and provides a brief history of community health.