

Building on Firm Foundations

Chronological
Approach
Seminar
Notes

These notes contain the overhead materials referred to during the course of the seminar and are included for your convenience. Permission is granted to photocopy this material.

TREVOR

McILWAIN

McIlwain, Trevor
E-F 1504

Teaching the Bible Chronologically for Evangelism and the Grounding of Believers

The purpose of this seminar

1. To present a practical and well proven approach to evangelism and the work of grounding believers in the scriptures.
2. To consider the reasons why we should teach the Scriptures chronologically and panoramically.
3. To give practical guidelines for teaching this program.

The Bible is the record of God's progressive revelation of Himself within the framework of history.

Building on Firm Foundations Vol.1, pages 74-76
Firm Foundations - Creation to Christ page 35

GOD IS AT WORK - John 5:17

- Since the dawn of history - God has been at work in this world.
- This world is the stage on which God has chosen to act.
- The rest of the universe is filled with angelic and human spectators.

The Bible is God's account of His unceasing work.

- The Bible gives us God's account of His work which He began - in the beginning - and has continued throughout the history of the world.
- It reveals to us:
 - what He is presently doing in the world,
 - what He plans to do until the time comes when He finally declares that His work in time and history has been completed.

The Bible is God's account of His work - past, present, and future.

- Instead of approaching the Bible as - "God's story of His work and His planned encounters with man", the church has mistakenly perceived and taught it as - "The stories of people and their encounters with God".

GOD has the LEADING ROLE in the whole drama of redemption.

The Bible is God's record of His work throughout the history of the world.

- What has God been doing since the beginning of time?
- What will He continue doing till the end of time?
- What will He do throughout all eternity?

It is only as we understand what HE IS DOING that we see clearly what WE SHOULD BE DOING.

What we perceive to be God's work will determine and govern the way we view and teach the Scriptures.

The central theme of all Scripture is the glory of God.

The Bible is the story of God's revelation of Himself to mankind.

The Bible is God's revelation of His glory.

Beginning with His creation of the world and continuing step by step through history, God has demonstrated the wonders of His own glorious person.

Christians generally consider the Scriptures to be the record of the words of God.

WHAT GOD HAS SAID

We often fail to take into account that the Bible is God's account to the world of -

WHAT GOD HAS DONE

The Bible is the record of God's acts in history

God has revealed Himself as He has walked through history with man.

God has not only told us in the Bible - WHAT to teach, He has also shown us HOW to teach.

Building on Firm Foundations Vol.1, pages 73-82
Firm Foundations - Creation to Christ pages 34-38

We should approach the Bible as God has given it.

Teach it as:

- ONE book
- ONE story
- ONE progressive revelation from God.

Christians should realize that they are history teachers - history wherein God has made Himself known.

- Just as each individual Israelite was taught to look back to God's acts of deliverance in Egypt as their basis for faith in Jehovah as Savior, so we must teach people God's historical saving acts in Christ as the only solid foundations for faith.

The message we are given in the Bible to teach to the world is not a list of doctrines or topical points about God.

What we declare is that which actually happened in time and space.

- IT IS REAL!
- IT IS FACTUAL!
- IT IS HISTORY!

The Bible is ONE STORY.

Building on Firm Foundations Vol. I, pages 65-73

Firm Foundations: Creation to Christ pages 31-34

The Christian Church has made the major mistake of failing to teach the BIBLE HOLISTICALLY - the Old and New Testaments combined.

The general tendency of the Church has been to endeavor to teach the New Testament, divorced from the Old Testament.

Just as God has given us two lips, both of which are necessary for clear communication, so the OT is a necessary foundation for the NT.

THE BIBLE IS THE STORY OF CHRIST - Luke 24:27.

**The most common Bible teaching methods
and the chronological approach.**

Building on Firm Foundations Vol.I, pages 105-129.

Firm Foundations: Creation to Christ Pt 1. pages 49-60

OLD TEST.	GOSPELS	ACTS	EPISTLES
Phase 1 —	—————	- ●	
—————	Phase II —	-●	
		Phase III	
			Phase IV
Phase V —	—————	-●	
		Phase VI	
			Phase VII

- Throughout Phase 1 lessons the listeners are faced with the dilemma of :
 - their own sinfulness
 - a perfectly just and holy God
 - God's refusal to accept them unless the full payment of death for sin is made.

- SINNERS are SEPARATED FROM GOD. They are:
 - SHUT OUT of the garden,
 - SHUT OUT of the Ark,
 - SHUT OUT of the Holy of Holies

- THERE IS NO WAY INTO GOD.
- NO WAY OF ESCAPE FROM DEATH.
- FULL PAYMENT MUST BE MADE FOR SIN.

PHASE 1 IS FOR

- THOSE NOT CLEAR CONCERNING THEIR SALVATION.
- BELIEVERS UNTAUGHT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

- BELIEVERS WISHING TO REACH OTHERS WITH THE GOSPEL.

PHASE 2 - FOR BELIEVERS particularly, for new believers.

Phase 2 is introduction and foundation for:

- Acts of the Apostles
- Remainder of the New Testament.

Phase 1 emphasis is SALVATION.

Phase 2 emphasis is THE SECURITY OF THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST.

The believer is constantly reminded throughout Phase 2 lessons that

- all God DEMANDED FROM him as a sinner has been PROVIDED FOR him BY CHRIST.
- NO LONGER ARE THEY SHUT OUT FOR THEY ARE NOW SHUT IN.

PHASE 3 - for believers. An overview of ACTS

The purpose of Phase 3 teaching is:

- To continue the story of the Lord Jesus following His ascension.
- To provide the historical and geographical background for the remainder of the NT.
- To use the infant Church in Acts as a model for the developing infant church.

PHASE 4 - for believers - An overview of the remainder of the books in the NT.

The Purpose of Phase 4 teaching:

- To complete the teaching of the overview of God's revelation which began in the book of Genesis.
- To make believers aware of their position in Christ and to teach them how to appropriate Christ's life through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.
- To emphasize God's holy standard for every part of the believer's life.
- To teach new believers their God-given position, gifts, and responsibilities as members of a New Testament church.
- To teach the scriptural requirements and ministry of pastors and deacons.
- To teach God's future program for His Church, Israel, and the world.

Phase 5 - for believers

Phase 1 - Salvation

Phase 2 - Security

Phase 5 - SANCTIFICATION

There must be preparation for the Gospel

Phase 6 - detailed study of Acts.

Phase 7 - detailed study of remaining books in the NT.

Building on Firm Foundations Vol.I, pages 33-63.

Firm Foundations - Creation to Christ pages 17-30

No one can or will believe the Gospel and be saved unless they are first taught and prepared by God.

Although it is God who prepares the heart of the sinner for the Gospel, He does not do it supernaturally apart from human instruments.

Too often we offer Christ as the ANSWER when people don't yet know that there is a QUESTION.

The human heart untouched by God's mighty preparatory work, is not naturally good soil for Gospel seed. 1 Cor. 2:14.

The felt needs of the natural man are not solid foundations for the presentation of the Gospel.

Some of the "felt needs" in western society would be:

- to get my life straightened out
- to enjoy secure and meaningful human relationships
- to feel loved and be at peace
- to feel secure in an uncertain world
- to have good health

The goal of the Gospel is not to supply man's felt needs but to bring him back into a right relationship with His Creator.

WHAT MUST THE UNSAVED BE TAUGHT TO PREPARE THEM for the Gospel?

The unsaved must be taught

- WHO GOD IS
- WHAT HE IS LIKE

Only then will they see themselves as **THEY REALLY ARE** - guilty, condemned, and helpless sinners.

GOD HAS REVEALED HIMSELF BY HIS LAW.

God gave the Law to classify and clearly define sin -
TO PINPOINT SIN
- showing it up in its true colors, so that we will recognize just how evil it really is in the sight of God.

Explanation of the doctrinal themes in Phase 1

The Law reveals **GOD'S** wrath against sin and shows us that man can only approach God if the complete, righteous demands of His Law are **PAID IN FULL.**

Building on Firm Foundations Vol.2, pages 74-79.

Firm Foundations - Creation to Christ pages 77-79.

In the drama of Redemption as spelled out in the Bible story, there are three main actors:

- GOD
- MAN
- SATAN.

DOCTRINAL THEMES EMPHASIZED IN PHASE 1.

- The Person and Character of God
 - God is supreme and sovereign.
 - God communicates with man.
 - God is omnipresent and omniscient.
 - God is omnipotent.

- God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.
- God is loving, merciful, and gracious.
- God is faithful and immutable.

- Man.
 - Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.
 - Man can come to God only according to God's will and plan.
 - Man must have faith in order to please God and be saved.

- Satan.
 - Satan fights against God and His will.
 - He is a liar and deceiver.
 - He hates man.

Clearly defining and presenting the Gospel

- Jesus Christ.
 - Jesus Christ is God.

What is the Gospel?

- Jesus Christ is man.
- Jesus Christ is holy and righteous.
- Jesus Christ is the only Savior.

Building on Firm Foundations Vol.I, pages 22-32

Firm Foundations - Creation to Christ pages 12-15

QUOTE: "The Gospel is the good news of what God has done outside of us in the person of Christ."

"It is the proclamation of a historic, objective reality."

THE GOSPEL "is not about our experiences but about Christ's experiences on our behalf."

Many Christians confuse the GOSPEL with the FRUIT OF THE GOSPEL.

They confuse God's past work that HE did FOR us IN CHRIST with the work the Holy Spirit does IN THE LIVES OF THOSE WHO BELIEVE the Gospel.

They confuse what God has finalized once for all in Christ FOR sinners with what God does IN all those who put their trust in Christ.

The gospel of the New Birth, or a gospel that focuses on a new or changed life rather than on Christ and His work alone for our salvation, is a pseudo gospel.

Telling people to ask Jesus into their lives to change them, or emphasizing that they will be born again if they ask Jesus into their lives, is not preaching the Gospel.

Unscriptural terminology used in modern day evangelism distorts the Gospel and confuses people.

Many common terms used to guide people in appropriating salvation, cause them to look within to their own experience rather than outward to Christ's saving experience on their behalf.

EXAMPLES:

- Give your heart to the Lord.
- Ask Jesus into your heart.
- Give your heart to Jesus.
- Give your life to Jesus.
- Open the door of your heart to the Lord.
- Surrender your life to Christ.
- Come to Christ and promise to serve Him.
- Ask the Lord to save you.
- Ask Jesus to wash away your sins.
- Make your decision for Christ.
- Ask God to save you.

NONE of these present the Gospel. They all direct people to their OWN DOING and to what they hope GOD WILL DO IN THEM rather than to what God has already DONE in Christ.

The Gospel is NOT the COMING of Jesus into man's heart, The Gospel is that Jesus CAME into the world and died for sinners.

The Gospel is NOT man ACCEPTING Jesus as Savior, but that God ACCEPTED the Lord Jesus to be the perfect and only Savior two thousand years ago.

The Gospel is NOT man GIVING his heart or his life to Jesus, but that Christ GAVE His life, in the place of sinners.

The Gospel is NOT man RECEIVING Christ into his heart, but that God RECEIVED the Lord Jesus into heaven as the only mediator between God and man.

The Gospel is NOT Christ ENTHRONED in the human heart, but that GOD ENTHRONED Him at his right hand as the only Savior under heaven whereby we must be saved.

The Gospel is NOT a message about anything that WILL HAPPEN IN US. The Gospel is about the wonderful work of God that HAS ALREADY HAPPENED FOR US IN CHRIST.

The Gospel is NOT SUBJECTIVE. IT IS WHOLLY OBJECTIVE. The message of the Gospel is:

"IT IS FINISHED!"

MY decision for
Christ

MY changed life

MY conversion experience

MY historical experiences as a
Christian

CHRIST'S
historical
experiences ON
MY BEHALF in
His death,
burial, and
resurrection.