
a *Grace Notes* course

Foundations I

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Foundations 110

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Grace Notes

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Lesson 26 – Expanding Your Study

The depth to which a teacher should study before the presentation of God’s Word depends largely upon the leading of the Holy Spirit and the maturity of the audience. However, personal study should seek the depths of God. As Christians with the Holy Spirit, we now have access to these treasures according to 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, which says:

“Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him. For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.”

The best way to present this point is by illustration; so we will expand 1 Thessalonians 1:3 to include key Greek words and their definitions. This verse says:

“constantly (ADIALEIPO = not going through a lack) bearing in mind (MNEMONEUW = remembering) your (plural) work (ERGOS = business, employment, that with which anyone is occupied) of faith (PISTIS = belief, trust) and labor (KOPOS = labor under adversity) of love (AGAPE = doing what is right even when you don’t feel like it) and steadfastness (HUPOMONE = to abide under, patience toward circumstances) of hope (ELPIS = confident expectation) in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence (EMPROSTHEN = in the face of) of our God and Father,”

CONTEXTUAL PRINCIPLE: TELL PEOPLE WHY WE GIVE THANKS TO GOD FOR THEM (COMPARE V2).

MAJOR POINT: SINCE THIS IS A MODEL CHURCH (V7), WE SEE THAT A MODEL CHURCH IS EVALUATED BY ITS FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE.

SOME OBSERVATIONS.

A One or more of these qualities is always found as an important part of each New Testament epistle, no matter who the author is.

B Notice that a “working Faith” and a “laboring Love” and a “patient Hope,” are in view.

C Thus, these three are interrelated and are active.

D All of these qualities can grow.

1. Faith - 2 Thess 1:3
2. Hope - Rom 15:13
3. Love - 2 Thess 1:3

E They are qualities that are designed by God to be lived so as to be seen.

1. Faith - Heb 11:1
2. Hope - Rom 8:24
3. Love - Eph 3:16-19

F If someone gets spiritually lukewarm or cold the progress they have made can be destroyed. Rev 3:14-20

G Paul told us that love was the greatest of these and if you don’t have it, you have nothing. 1 Cor 13:1-3,13

H If a church has none of these qualities, the result is either legalism, like the Galatians, or license, like the Corinthians, or a combination of legalism and license.

YOU MIGHT ALSO EXPAND YOUR STUDY TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING THREE PRINCIPLES.

WORK OF FAITH.

- 1) The work of faith means that faith has become your occupation, thus your lifestyle is based on it.
- 2) The Greek literally says, “the work of the faith,” which indicates a response to circumstances that proceeds from belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3) Some view “the work of the faith” to be the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- 4) The phrase, “the faith,” is often used in scripture to refer to the body of truth found in the written Word, but since this is only the third New Testament (after James and Galatians) book that has been written, it is doubtful that Paul is referring to this use.
- 5) The “work of faith” does not provide the justification that saves. Rom 3:27-28; Gal 2:16
- 6) Faith, not works, justifies the ungodly. Rom 4:5

- 7) A person who pursues salvation by works stumbles over the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom 9:32
- 8) Great leaders in the faith view themselves as co-workers and not rulers. 2 Cor 1:24
- 9) After one has been saved, justified by faith, an ongoing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ should produce works of grace. 2 Cor 8:7
- 10) A Believer does not receive the Holy Spirit by works either, but works are an outgrowth of spirituality. Gal 3:2-5
- 11) Faith works through spiritual love because of hope. Gal 5:5-6
- 12) But Satan wants faith stopped and usually uses a manmade system such as legalism to attempt it. Gal 5:7,13
- 13) Our faith is not to be in ourselves but in God who is working in us. Col 2:12; Phil 2:12-16
- 14) We need to pray that other Believers will have a powerful work of faith. 2 Th 1:11; James 2:14-26

PRINCIPLE: A MODEL CHURCH HAS A FAITH THAT BECOMES VISIBLE THROUGH LETTING GOD DO HIS WORK THROUGH THEM.

LABOR OF LOVE.

- 1) This is the only place in the New Testament that the two words (labor and love) are used closely together.
- 2) One of life's rewards is that your toil may let you enjoy life with the spouse you love. Eccl 9:9
- 3) This particular word for labor indicates a toil that will expend itself to exhaustion.
- 4) This is a labor that is for the benefit of others. John 4:37-38
- 5) This labor is a fellowship in God's business of love. 1 Cor 3:6-9
- 6) The toil expended in the Lord's work is not in vain. 1 Cor 15:58
- 7) One cannot legitimately claim credit for the toil of another. 2 Cor 10:14-1
- 8) Deceitful workers exaggerate their labors. 2 Cor 11:23-27

- 9) God's workers must be willing to labor to the point of exhaustion if necessary so as to not burden new converts. 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8
- 10) No one wants to see their labor be in vain. 1 Thess 3:5
- 11) Labor without love can cost a local church its very existence. Rev 2:2-7
- 12) This love is AGAPE (Greek) love that means to do what is right and best even if you don't feel like it.
- 13) Thus, a "labor of love" is a labor to the point of exhaustion that does what is right and best for others even when one doesn't feel like it.
- 14) It is labor with a valid purpose behind it.
- 15) It is presenting your body a living and holy sacrifice (Rom 12:1), considering others as more important than yourself (Php 2:3), with a motivation of fulfilling the two greatest commands (Mark 12:29-31).

PRINCIPLE: A MODEL CHURCH IS WILLING TO GO TO THE POINT OF EXHAUSTION OUT OF LOVE FOR GOD AND OTHERS.

PRINCIPLE: NOTICE THAT THIS IS A CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CHURCH BODY AND NOT JUST THE PASTOR.

STEADFASTNESS (PATIENCE) OF HOPE.

- 1) "Steadfastness of Hope" is a patience toward circumstances that is generated by hope.
- 2) The Greek word ELPIS which is translated as "hope" means a confident expectation in the future.
- 3) Hope is actually based in the person of Jesus Christ. 1 Tim 1:1
- 4) The more Christ is formed in you, the more you will realize the riches of His glory. Col 1:27
- 5) Faith, hope and love are intimately tied to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet 1:20-22
- 6) A hope that is fixed on Jesus Christ leads to purification of the soul. 1 Jn 3:1-3
- 7) Those who patiently bear fruit manifest the greatness of the gospel. Luke 8:15
- 8) Those who patiently continue doing good will develop the sense of eternal life. Rom 2:5-11

- 9) Patience is an important element in the development of hope. Rom 5:1-5
- 10) Hope is not something that is presently manifested but with patience is eagerly anticipated. Rom 8:23-26
- 11) Patience and encouragement from the Word of God are two elements that develop hope. Rom 15:4
- 12) This patience and encouragement comes from God who expects it to positively affect our relationships with one another. Rom 15:5-7
- 13) Patience and labor are qualities of being servants of God. 2 Cor 6:1-12
- 14) The knowledge of God's will is designed in part so that we may attain to patience. Col 1:9-14
- 15) When a church displays patience, others in the church body will be touched. 2 Thess 1:4; 2 Thess 3:5
- 16) Patience is a valid pursuit of a godly person. 1 Tim 6:11-12
- 17) We all need models of patience. 2 Tim 3:10-13
- 18) Older men are to be examples of patience. Titus 2:2
- 19) Patience based in faith is important in receiving all that God has promised. Heb 10:36-39
- 20) Patience is part of the race we run. Heb 12:1-3
- 21) Patience is an element of the maturity of the Believer. James 1:2-4
- 22) Patience is an element of fulfilling the two greatest commands. 2 Pet 1:5-7
- 23) A church that has patience, but does not have love, is in danger. Rev 2:2-4
- 24) A church that has love, faith, service and patience but tolerates evil is also in danger. Rev 2:19-20
- The patience of Jesus Christ on the cross is the basis for deliverance of Believers from the tribulation. Rev 3:10-11

Lesson 27 – Making the Points

As a teacher of God's Word, you will have a lot more information than your audience will be able to understand and remember. Of course, you want others to understand the message, and remember it. Too many facts, no matter how accurate, will often lead to confusion. It is best to keep the message simple and practical.

Focus on making one important point. One way to accomplish this principle is to use illustrations. For example, if we view the important point to be a nail that is being driven into a piece of wood, each stroke of a hammer drives the nail a little deeper until the objective is accomplished. Each illustration should make the same point to achieve the desired objective.

Notice the way we have approached the study of God's Word. We have sought to get the big picture first, then seek the details, and then decide how the details fit into the big picture.

In 1 Thessalonians 1:2, we saw Paul give thanks for others who were growing in the faith. One message might be "Give thanks for all things." Such a message is important because immature Believers often focus only on themselves and what they lack, rather than being thankful for what they have.

Once the Lord Jesus took the five loaves and two fishes and thanked the Father for them. Despite the apparent lack of enough food, He gave thanks for what they had rather than asking for more, and a miracle occurred.

We can read about that event in all four gospels (Matt 14:15-21; Mark 6:37-44; Luke 9:13-17; John 6:5-13). In not one account, does the Lord ask the Father to "multiply" the fish and loaves. Instead, in all four Gospels Jesus gives thanks. We might challenge the hearers with the question, "Do you spend more of your time in thanksgiving or complaints?" We might use examples of people we have known who have had very few material possessions, but were thankful to God for what they had. People who receive that message should realize the importance of thanksgiving to God. Note that the Greek word for thanksgiving is EUCHARISTIA. It is made up of two Greek words: "EU" and "CHARIS." "EU" means

“good.” CHARIS means “grace.” Thus, thanksgiving is recognition of the goodness of God’s grace. Those who lack thanksgiving in their life, probably don’t appreciate grace.

Illustrations will be of great help in explaining Scripture. The best illustrations do not come from books, but from observations of life. The communicator needs to become keenly aware of what God has done and is doing around him.

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The following bibliography does not attempt to include all the titles that are pertinent to our course of study, as this would take a book in itself. It does represent the main authorities and the works consulted in the writing of this book.

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