

It is important that our basic concepts be true to the Bible

Ideas have consequences. Our external behavior grows out of our internal thinking — it is our ideas that produce our outward actions. And since that's true, it is necessary for us as Christians to examine our thinking continually. ***It is important that our basic concepts be true to the Bible.*** If our thinking slips into the realm of erroneous ideas, the problem with that is not merely that we have become believers of false doctrine. Eventually, those untrue concepts will show up in wrongful behavior. As an old-timer put it, “Whatever's down in the well is going to come up in the bucket.”

Unlike a physical building whose foundation, once laid, cannot easily be modified, our thinking can be refined as we go along. No matter how careful we've been in the past to make sure our fundamental principles are sound, we can always recheck for accuracy and improve the quality of our foundation. Paul even urged that we periodically examine whether we are “in the faith” (2 Cor. 13:5). Surely that means we ought to review our most basic concepts from time to time.

The word “principle” carries with it the idea of something being “first.” An intellectual principle is an idea that is “first” in the sense that it is a basic idea out of which many other important considerations grow. The Bible, of course, is full of principles. God intends for us to learn these principles and then have them ready to apply — honestly and conscientiously — when we face specific situations where they are pertinent. Obviously, if we have incorrect principles in our heads, we are going to make many mistakes in the realm of daily living. If our mental and spiritual foundation is not in good shape, the structure of our lives is going to be shaky. But if the beginning ideas are sound, then there's a much better chance the conduct will be as it should.

Many of the divisions that exist in the world of denominational “Christianity” amount to different views as to the basic principles of the Bible. This week, let's take the time to review some of the most fundamental concepts relating to the Bible, God, salvation, and the church. We will do a much better job of dealing with the specific issues in these areas if we have grounded ourselves in sound principles in these areas. Let's always pray and study with a view to having a better, more accurate understanding of God's will for us.

Monday: 2 Peter 1:19-21

Key Idea: The Bible is God's inspired and authoritative word for us today.

Questions for Family Growth: What does it mean that no Scripture “is of any private interpretation” (NKJV)? What “moved” the men who wrote the books of Scripture? According to **Jn. 12:48**, what will we be judged by in the end?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 19:24.**

Tuesday: Hebrews 5:9

Key Idea: By His grace, God is the Savior of all who obey the gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Questions for Family Growth: To whom is Christ “the source of eternal salvation”? According to **2 Thess. 1:7,8**, what will happen to those who do not obey the gospel? What does this teach us about the character of God?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 19:25**.

Wednesday: Ephesians 2:19,20

Key Idea: The gospel was revealed completely and authoritatively to the apostles in the first century.

Questions for Family Growth: According to this passage, what is the foundation upon which the church is built? In God’s plan to save us from sin, how important are the apostles? What does it mean that the faith was “once for all delivered to the saints” (**Jd. 3**)?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 19:26**.

Thursday: 1 Corinthians 4:17 and 7:17

Key Idea: The first century church, under the authority of the apostles, is our pattern to go by today.

Questions for Family Growth: What is the importance of the fact that the apostles taught the same thing “everywhere in every church”? Today, do we have to pay attention to the apostolic precedents that were set while the apostles were living? Consider **2 Thess. 2:15**.

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 19:27**.

Friday: Hebrews 10:24,25

Key Idea: God has designed the local congregation as an essential part of Christianity.

Questions for Family Growth: In this text, what were Christians told not to forsake or neglect? Why was this so important? What does it mean to “consider” one another? What were faithful local congregations called in **Rom. 16:16**? What does it mean for a congregation to be “of Christ”?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 19:28**.

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