A helpful guide to teaching God’s Word with clarity, authority and care.
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An adaptation by Nancy Everson of the original

*Firm Foundations: Creation to Christ,*
Trevor McIlwain with Nancy Everson
What is Firm Foundations?

Just what is *Firm Foundations*? It is foundational, chronological Bible teaching.

This method of teaching is patterned on God’s progressive revelation of Himself and His plan to rescue people from sin, Satan and death. Lessons start “in the beginning.” Moving through the Old and New Testaments, *Firm Foundations* highlights the themes that run through all of God’s Word. This builds, from lesson to lesson, an understanding of the Bible as a whole.

This practical approach has been used all over the world, and is proven for:

- Evangelism
- Grounding new believers
- Teaching maturing believers
- Planting churches

*Firm Foundations* arose from the experience of Trevor McIlwain in the 1960s. While working cross-culturally with a people group in the Philippines, Trevor saw the need to establish proper biblical foundations. He developed Bible lessons to meet that need. As Trevor states, “The Scriptures were progressively revealed by God within the context and framework of history. Therefore, the best way to teach divine truth in any culture is God’s way, within the chronological and historical framework of the Scriptures.”

Trevor shared this approach with other missionaries who were also teaching cross-culturally, initially distributing his basic outline and later detailed Bible lessons. They discovered, as he had, that this *Firm Foundations* approach was effective.

When these missionaries returned home, their glowing testimonies inspired pastors and other Bible teachers to adopt this method. As a result, the *Firm Foundations* lessons were modified for churches and home Bible studies, and this approach has proven equally effective in English-speaking settings as in cross-cultural settings.

Since that time, adaptations of the *Firm Foundations* materials have been developed for many languages, cultural contexts and age groups.
About This Curriculum


With Trevor McIlwain’s approval, the original lessons were developed into a Sunday School course. Vocabulary and illustrations were changed to be kid-friendly, and visual aids, review sheets, skits, and activities were added to help the children focus on the themes in each lesson.

Since its first printing in 1993, the Firm Foundations: Creation to Christ, [Children’s Edition] has been used throughout the English-speaking world in Sunday school classes, home school settings, and for family devotions.

The course itself is for the teacher. Children use their Bibles, along with an optional workbook or photo-copied worksheets.

Although the curriculum is designed specifically for 3rd and 4th graders, it can be easily used for other reading-aged children.

Firm Foundations: Creation to Christ, [Children’s Edition] contains:

- Book 1 — Teacher Instruction and Preparation
- Book 2 — Lessons 1–12 (Creation – The Birth of Cain and Abel)
- Book 3 — Lesson 13–25 (God Rejected Cain but Accepted Abel – The Ten Commandments)
- Book 4 — Lessons 26–38 (The Tabernacle – Jesus’ Birth and Ministry)
- Book 5 — Lesson 39–50 (Jesus’ Miracles – the Resurrection and Ascension)
- 3 full-color maps
- One full-color Timeline, depicting the events covered in the lessons
- A set of 15 colorful teaching visuals, to be used as posters or on an overhead projector.

Supplementary materials:

- Workbook, containing a skit and worksheet for each lesson
- Full-color Bible teaching pictures, laminated or non-laminated, large or small
- Black and white Bible teaching pictures to use as coloring pages
- CD with Bible teaching pictures (color and black and white) in several formats
- Posters, Maps, and Timeline are part of the Teacher Set, but can also be purchased separately.
Firm Foundations Materials Available

**Firm Foundations by Trevor McIlwain [Revised Edition]**
- Book 1 — Creation to Christ: Chronological Teaching Why and How
- Book 2 — Creation to Christ: Lessons 1-12 (Creation – Cain and Abel)
- Book 3 — Creation to Christ: Lessons 13-24 (Flood – Ten Commandments)
- Book 4 — Creation to Christ: Lessons 25-36 (Tabernacle – Plots against Jesus)
- Book 5 — Creation to Christ: Lessons 37-48 (Jesus Calms the Storm – Ascension)
- Book 6 — Secure in Christ
- Book 7 — Acts
- Book 8 — Romans
- Book 9 — Ephesians

Workbook — Creation to Christ
Workbook — Secure in Christ
Workbook — Acts
Workbook — Romans
Workbook — Ephesians

**Building on Firm Foundations by Trevor McIlwain [Cross-cultural Edition]**
- Volume 1 — Guidelines for Evangelism and Teaching Believers (revised edition)
- Volume 2 — Evangelism: Genesis to the Ascension (revised edition)
- Volume 3 — Teaching New Believers: Genesis to the Ascension (revised edition)
- Volume 5 — Teaching New Believers: Romans and Ephesians (revised edition)
- Volume 6 — Teaching New Believers: 1 Corinthians, 1 Timothy and Titus (revised edition)
- Volume 7 — Teaching New Believers: 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Revelation
- Volume 8 — Teaching New Believers: Galatians, Colossians
- Volume 9 — Teaching New Believers: 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Philemon, 2 Timothy

**Firm Foundations: Creation to Christ [Children’s Edition]**
- Book 1 — Teacher Instruction and Preparation
- Book 2 — Lessons 1-12 (Creation – The Birth of Cain and Abel)
- Book 3 — Lessons 13-25 (God Rejected Cain but Accepted Abel – The Ten Commandments)
- Book 4 — Lessons 26-38 (The Tabernacle – Jesus’ Birth and Ministry)
- Book 5 — Lessons 39-50 (Jesus’ Miracles – Jesus’ Resurrection and Ascension)
- Workbook — Containing a skit and worksheet for each lesson

**Firm Foundations: Creation to Christ [Christian School Edition] [Available soon]**

Information about translated materials, and other resources, can be found at:
- **Canada:** www.ntmc.ca or email bookstore@ntmc.ca or 519.369.2622
- **United Kingdom:** http://uk.ntm.org/shop or email books@ntm.org.uk or 44 (0) 1472.387700
- **USA:** www.ntmbbooks.com or email books@ntm.org or 800.321.5375.
Dedication

With joy and thanksgiving we dedicate these children’s lessons to our Lord Jesus Christ and to His Church, with believing prayer that He will use His Word for His glory:

To give those who teach an increased understanding and awe of God and a deepened love for Him and His Word;

To give children the true knowledge of Himself;

To draw whole families to Himself;

To raise up children who will come to know, love and serve God and be willing to teach others, who will in turn teach others, who will also teach others …

“... that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

— John 17:3
IMPORTANT
NOTE TO TEACHERS:

To effectively use these children’s lessons,
READ AND STUDY BOOK 1
before you begin
studying and teaching
the lessons themselves.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS:
Please see note on page 72.
If you have time, also read and study
Book 1.

PASTORS AND
SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS:
Please see note on page 72 of Book 1.
Even though you may not be the one teaching
this material, please read Book 1, which
explains the teaching rationale
used in the lessons.
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Foreword

We live in a day when our children are being overwhelmed with messages and information from a multitude of sources. Many of them are being brought up with TV as their baby-sitter and thus are getting their values and worldview from Hollywood. The message they are being sold by the media and the educational system is that there is no absolute truth and that they are autonomous individuals who must decide for themselves what truth is. At the same time, the Bible is either belittled or ignored. The result is that many conclude that the Bible is nothing more than an irrelevant collection of myths and fables. We are producing a generation of children who are as ignorant of the Scriptures as remote jungle tribesmen.

In such a setting, using a children’s Bible curriculum that consists of bland platitudes is akin to sallying forth armed with cardboard swords to slay dragons. Admonitions “to be kind to one another” or “to be like David” pale when compared to the visual onslaughts of the enemy to which most children have been exposed for multiplied hours every day of their lives.

How can we meet the challenge? We must allow the Word of God to captivate the hearts and imaginations of our young people. They must come to know the awesome, holy God who is revealed in Scripture. But how can this be accomplished?

You are holding in your hands materials that have proved to be effective in a wide variety of cultures with both adults and children. The materials are thoroughly biblical and focus on the essential issues that all people must come to grips with: the nature and character of God, mankind’s helpless sinful condition, and God’s provision of redemption planned in eternity past and revealed progressively throughout Scripture. It has long been known that stories are an excellent means of teaching children abstract concepts and ideas. As children are taught through the key events of the Bible with God as the central figure, the stories impart an understanding of God and themselves from a biblical perspective. With the foundational truths of God’s Word firmly established in their hearts and minds, they see the Gospel as the Good News it truly is!

Donald L. Pederson
New Tribes Mission
Firm Foundations — Building According to Plan
Part 1

Firm Foundations — Building According to Plan

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With a thunderous sound, the walls cracked and crumbled. Timbers splintered. The roof buckled and fell into pieces. Floor after floor crashed one upon another, crushing, trapping, killing the tenants. In a few moments, the high-rise apartments were reduced to rubble.

How had the disaster happened? The building looked sturdy. Why would it suddenly collapse?

Subsequent investigations proved that the builder had not followed the proper building specifications and plans. Willing to gamble with the lives and the safety of human beings for the sake of money, he had cut corners and economized on every part of the building.

The depth of the concrete had been reduced, and not all of the steel reinforcements required for the foundations had been laid down. Thus, the foundations were inadequate for the height and the weight of the building. The walls and floors lacked the necessary steel rods to hold and strengthen the building.

The builder had disregarded the instructions which had been given to him. He had followed his own way because it was easier and quicker and brought him greater profit.

The results? Sorrow! Destruction! Death!

Just as this builder carelessly ignored construction standards and specifications, many Christians all over the world carelessly disregard the Master Builder’s plans for building His Church.

In most instances, mass evangelism and personal evangelism, as well as the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, is not being done according to the biblical plans given to the Church by the Divine Architect. Many who are engaged in the work of building the Church are so engrossed in their own ideas and schemes that they do not stop to consider if they are working according to God’s divine directions or whether their work will pass His final scrutiny.

God is the Builder of His Church (Matthew 16:18). But He has chosen His earthly children to be laborers together with Him (I Corinthians 3:9). The Christian’s work in building the Church is similar to that of a building contractor. Just as a contractor is responsible to follow exactly the plans given to him by the owner of a building, so we are responsible to follow God’s plans for building His Church.

God is the true builder of all things. “For every house is builded by some man: but he that built all things is God” (Hebrews 3:4). God builds everything according to His eternal plans. He will not change. He will never accommodate man’s ideas or go with the times. He will never permit any change in the specifications which He has laid down for all that He has planned to do in what we call “time.” His work always has adequate foundations, and He builds carefully, patiently, and precisely. He refuses to take short cuts in anything He does, and He never uses inferior materials or methods which are contrary to His holy and perfect nature.

The first account in Scripture of God’s building work is when He created the heavens and the earth. “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast” (Psalm 33:6,9). God was the Creator Builder of all things, seen and unseen. Satan’s lie, the theory of evolution, foisted on foolish, unbelieving man, is contrary to the nature and character of God. Nothing is left to chance with God. He is always in full and complete control of all His works. Everything was created according to His perfect plan, and He declared that it was all good (Genesis 1:31).

Later in the Scriptures, we have the account of God’s command to Noah to build an ark. But God did not command Noah to build the ark and then leave Noah to formulate his own plans. God told Noah exactly what must be done; and Noah, God’s faithful workman, did everything just as the Lord commanded him (Genesis 6:22).

When God chose to dwell with Israel, He commanded Moses to build the tabernacle. And how was Moses to build it? “...See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount” (Hebrews 8:5). Every detail, from the silver sockets which were the foundations for the boards of the
The Master Builder’s Plan

tabernacle to the outer coverings of badger skins, was to be made exactly according to the divine pattern shown to Moses on Mount Sinai. Scripture assures us that Moses was faithful to Him that appointed him (Hebrews 3:2). Only on one account is it recorded that Moses was careless and did not obey the clear command of the Lord. For striking, instead of speaking to the rock, he was banned from entering the promised land (Numbers 20:7-12). How important it is to do all things according to God’s plan!

God’s work of building the heavens and the earth was done by the power of His Word. Noah and Moses followed the Word of God in all that they built. God’s present work of building His Church is also being accomplished through His mighty Word. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Corinthians 4:6).

The building of the universe was the work of God alone. He did not use any angelic or human agent. But the great work of building the Church, like the work of building the ark and the tabernacle, has been committed to His children. “...we have this treasure in earthen vessels ...” (II Corinthians 4:7), “…we are ambassadors for Christ...” (II Corinthians 5:20), “…ye shall be witnesses unto me ... unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). God has chosen to bring His Church to completion through the teaching of His Word by the members of the Church.

If the ark and the tabernacle had to be built exactly according to God’s plan, should not the Church also be built according to His plan? Surely the Bride of Christ is of even greater importance than the ark or the tabernacle. The use for the ark came to an end, and the tabernacle was superseded by the temple, but the Church is to last for eternity. Therefore, “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (I Corinthians 3:17).

Every man’s work, in relationship to the building of the Church, will be tried by fire. It will all come under the scrutinizing gaze of the Great Master Builder whose servants and co-laborers we are. “For we are labourers together with God ...” and must therefore be wise, taking careful note to see if we are doing our work as He has commanded (I Corinthians 3:9-23).

Paul refers to himself as a wise master builder (I Corinthians 3:10). He laid the foundations of the Gospel on which the Corinthians’ faith and hope were built, and he warned the Bible teachers in Corinth to be careful what they built on those biblical foundations which he had laid (I Corinthians 15:1-4).

By what standard did Paul judge his own building methods and work and conclude that he was a wise master builder? How can all subsequent builders be sure that they are proceeding in the correct way and that their work will meet with divine approval? Has God only told us what to teach in His Word, or has He also shown us how to teach? How can we be sure that the foundations we lay, on which others are to rest their faith, will see them safely into Heaven and stand firm in the great day of testing? How can we be certain that we have taught God’s children everything that God wants them to know? What checklist shall we use to determine if we are making headway and whether the building is being brought to completion in accordance with the divine plan? How can church planters know if they have done all that they should have done? These questions gripped my mind and guided my search when, as a new missionary, I was responsible to lay the foundations of the Gospel and build up the individual members of the body of Christ on remote island of the Philippines. Years passed before I understood the answers to these questions. Why did it take so long? Because my mind was captivated by traditional Bible teaching methods. The answers I needed were finally found through looking to God’s Word alone.

After my prayers had been answered and the Lord had shown me the teaching principles which He has used and illustrated throughout His entire Word, He then opened opportunities for me to share these principles with others who were also searching. In 1980, I taught a seminar for missionaries in the Philippines. These biblical teaching principles excited and gripped the hearts of many missionaries who were struggling with problems identical to those I once faced in evangelism and church planting. These missionaries returned to their work with fresh enthusiasm, for they now had clearer guidelines and precise goals for their teaching ministry.

Seminars were also held in Bolivia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Senegal, Thailand, and the United States. These initial seminars majored on evangelism, and as missionaries returned to their work and began to follow biblical guidelines for evangelism, there were immediate and lasting results. Firm foundations for saving faith were laid down by teaching a chronological overview of the Bible story, beginning in Genesis and concluding with the ascension of Christ. Many native people from various tribal groups have come to a clear understanding of God’s nature and character, their own sinfulness, helplessness, and hopelessness, and Christ’s all-sufficient saving work through His death, burial, and resurrection. Their understanding of God’s plan of salvation and the certainty of their faith far surpassed that of many others who had professed conversion previously. Furthermore, through this chronological teaching, many sincere tribal people, who had previously professed Christianity, came to realize that they had misunderstood the missionaries’ message when they were taught previously and are now trusting in a message which they clearly understand.
One of the first reports of great blessing came from Bob Kennell and George Walker. They had followed these scriptural methods when teaching the story of the Bible to the primitive and previously untouched Bisorio tribe in the Sepik region of Papua New Guinea. The Bisorio people responded to a message which they clearly understood from the Scriptures. Theirs is no blind faith, based merely on what the white man said. Instead, it is based on a clear understanding of the God of the Bible and the history of redemption.

Which is the clearest, most simple, and yet most comprehensive method of teaching the Word of God to prepare people for the Gospel and to teach them God’s way of salvation? How should we teach in order to build up God’s children and lead them into a knowledge of the whole counsel of God? These questions should be of great importance to us, whether we are seminary professors, pastors, missionaries, Bible class leaders, Sunday school teachers, youth workers, or concerned parents wishing to see our children taught the Word of God.

Christ and His Gospel are the only foundations which God has ordained as a basis for the faith of guilty sinners (I Corinthians 3:11; 15:1, 2). But there is great confusion even among Christians regarding these foundations and the correct way to establish them through preaching God’s Word.

In the construction of any building, the foundations are the first part of the structure to be prepared. The majority of Gospel preaching, however, is usually done with very little foundational preparation. This lack has contributed to a multitude of false professions and the uncertainty of many new Christians about the foundations of their faith.

Another obvious mistake in Christian education has been the failure to teach the Bible consistently as one book, just as God has prepared it for us through progressive revelation. Teaching outlines are carefully devised and prepared, but we rarely stop to consider that the Bible has already been prepared for us with an inbuilt teaching outline which, if followed, will give us a clear, uncomplicated, comprehensive coverage of the entire Word of God.

We usually approach the Bible as if it were a treasure chest full of beautiful, precious gems. We assume that these jewels have not been given any definite pattern or design and think that the responsibility is ours to arrange them in some order which will enhance their beauty and cause them to be better appreciated. While we recognize the value of the Scriptures, we presume that there is no definite, divinely-given teaching outline which runs through the entire Word of God. Having made this deduction, we then proceed to arrange the Scriptures into what we consider to be comprehensive and lucid outlines. This is a basic mistake made by many Bible teachers. Too much time is spent developing methods and theories for Bible teaching, and insufficient time is given to simply teaching the Scriptures as they have been written.

The majority of Christian teaching emphasizes individual doctrines of the Bible rather than presenting the Bible as one complete, interdependent revelation of God. Heresies, misinterpretation and overemphasis of certain Scriptures, and denominationalism can, in most cases, be traced to this lack of chronological and panoramic Bible teaching.

After many years of listening to non-sequential, topical, doctrinal sermons, most of which are based on isolated texts, many church members still do not know the Bible as one book. Often repeated verses and some doctrines may be known; but the Scriptures, according to their divinely-given historical structure, are seldom understood.

This is equally true in most Sunday schools. Children are usually taught stories from the Bible out of chronological order, and large portions of God’s Word are never taught to them at all. Even a faithful Sunday school pupil is unlikely to graduate with an overall knowledge of the Bible.

Foreign missionaries have not usually been any wiser when teaching the Scriptures to people without any previous Bible knowledge. Few changes are made to the methods used in the homeland. Insufficient time is generally given to teach the Old Testament background and foundations for the Gospel. Syncretism of heathen and Christian beliefs is often the sad result. Many in foreign lands who have professed Christianity do not understand the Gospel and the Scriptures as one book. Many missionaries are so eager to preach the Gospel that they feel it is an unnecessary waste of time to teach tribal people too much of the historical portions of the Old Testament Scriptures. Nevertheless, these Old Testament historical sections form the basis for a clear understanding of the coming of Christ and the necessity of His death, burial, and resurrection. The Old Testament Scriptures, correctly taught, will prepare the heart of the believing sinner to receive the Gospel in true repentance and faith.

The following chapters record my frustrations, my search, and also my joy at discovering divine teaching principles and guidelines in the Word of God as well as a
clear, simple, yet comprehensive way to teach the Scriptures to the unsaved and to the children of God.

Through my own experiences, but more importantly, on the basis of the truth of God’s Word, I will endeavor to show that the Scriptures were progressively revealed by God within the context and framework of history; and, therefore, the best way to teach divine truth in any culture is God’s way, within the chronological and historical framework of the Scriptures.
The Palawano tribe, living on the island of Palawan in the southwestern region of the Philippines, was down-trodden for centuries.

The proud, fierce Moslems who lived on the smaller islands lying off the coast of Palawan oppressed these timid, fearful jungle people for many years. Numerous stories, now part of Palawano folklore, tell of the massacres and molestations of the Palawano tribal people by the marauding Moslem sea warriors, called Moros.

Yet another oppression for the Palawanos came from some of the Filipino settlers who migrated from other islands of the Philippines. They came seeking land for rice fields and coconut plantations, and timber from the virgin forests for export. Many of these settlers took advantage of the native people of Palawan. They found that these unassuming, uneducated jungle people were easily intimidated. Through fear of these aggressive new settlers, many Palawanos left their ancestral lands and coconut plantations close to the sea for the less hospitable foothills and mountains of the island.

Then came a time of even greater sadness and testing. Their island home was invaded by the Japanese. This was a fearful era in the Palawanos’ history. Women were molested, and children were brutally killed. Livestock was stolen and killed. Rice, their basic food, was often deliberately and maliciously scattered by the invaders as they knocked down the Palawanos’ granaries. The suffering of these years surpassed all other segments of their inglorious history.

Then came an unexpected reprieve from their fear and degradation. The US liberation forces landed in Palawan. In all my years with the Palawano people, I heard only praise and admiration for these soldiers, never one word of reproach. While visiting in the homes of the tribal people, many of the older Palawano men asked me if I knew some particular officer by whom they had been befriended. They spoke of them with great affection. They obviously enjoyed remembering incidents when the “Amirikans” had warned the national Filipinos not to ill-treat the Americans’ “little Palawano brothers.” The Palawanos saw it as a sad day when the US forces withdrew from Palawan and their future became uncertain once again.

Years passed, and then, quite unexpectedly for the Palawanos, another American came to their part of the island. He was even more generous than all the other Americans they had known previously. Meanness and anger are frowned on in Palawan society. This missionary displayed love and kindness. Through his ministry and the ministry of the missionaries who followed him, several thousand Palawanos professed conversion, were baptized, and organized into indigenous churches.

When we arrived years later, we questioned the Palawanos as to why they had so readily submitted to baptism. One man answered, “We would have done anything for that first missionary. If he had asked us to cut our fingers off, we would have gladly done it for him.”

The danger always exists that previously rejected and exploited people will respond to the Christian missionary’s message, not because they see their real need as sinners and understand the Gospel, but because of genuine appreciation for the missionary and a longstanding desire to escape their difficult and degraded sociological conditions. This was the major reason for the “people movement” to Christianity which took place almost immediately when the first New Tribes missionary preached to the Palawanos.

Confusion regarding the Gospel

Following this major people movement to Christianity, more missionaries arrived to assist in the work. They faithfully taught the duties of believers to those who had professed conversion. Unbeknown to the missionaries, the majority of the Palawano church members were interpreting the responsibilities of believers in the only way that they could as unsaved people. They thought the duties of the believer were the things they must do so they could continue to be “in God.” “In God” was the term they generally used to describe their conversion to Christianity. They had come “into God” by their acceptance of Christ through faith, baptism, church attendance, singing, prayer, not stealing, and not committing adultery. For the truly dedicated, abstinence from alcohol, betel nut, and tobacco were also understood as being necessary to guarantee their continued position “in God.”
Check the Foundations

During their church meetings, they sometimes spoke of Christ and His death; but more frequently, they testified of their faithfulness to the Lord by abstaining from sinful works and by church attendance. Obviously missing was praise to God for their salvation by Christ through His unmerited favor alone. Even though salvation by faith through grace alone had been taught, the majority had not clearly understood. They were trusting in a mixture of grace and works.

In spite of the emphasis on Christian living, many failed to live according to biblical standards. Divorce, remarriage, and drunkenness were the normal practice in the Palawanos’ old way of life and continued to be major problems in all of the churches. The missionaries and church elders were very concerned about the condition of the churches and constantly exhorted the people to lay aside these old ways and follow the new way in Christ. The wayward church members would repent and function outwardly as Christians for a while; but often, they would fall back into their old ways until they were once again challenged and “revived,” starting the cycle all over again.

Even though there were the faithful ones, the Palawano church was like a building lacking the correct foundations. Large cracks appeared continually in the upper walls. The missionaries and church leaders spent their time running from church to church, trying to patch up the gaping holes. The problem, however, was in the people’s basic foundational understanding and acceptance of the Gospel.

Because they had never seen their own personal sinfulness and inability to please God, they had not realized that their only hope was to trust in God’s provision for all sinners through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. If they had trusted only in Him for God’s acceptance, then their faith would have produced godliness and obedience to the commands of Scripture, not in order to obtain salvation, but as the fruit of true saving faith.

My wife and I began our work as foreign missionaries with New Tribes Mission in 1965 in the Philippines. We worked with the Palawano tribe over a period of ten years. My responsibility was to see the elders and the church elders were very concerned about the major problems in all of the churches. The missionaries and church leaders needed to be taught to stand for God’s word, regardless of the cultural discomposure caused by confronting a teacher with the truth. False cults were increasing on the island, and these Palawano church leaders were faced with the endeavors of these false teachers to lead them and their congregations into error. I needed to be sure that these Bible teachers really understood the Gospel, that they were personally trusting only in Christ, and that they would be able to stand firm against false teachers. Of course, I only used this method after months of teaching these men. This method would not have been effective if used in the beginning of my association with the Palawano leadership. They would have verbally agreed with me in spite of what they actually believed in their hearts.