A helpful guide to teaching God’s Word with clarity, authority and care.
Firm Foundations
Creation to Christ

Children’s Edition

Book 2

Lessons 1-12
Creation – The Birth of Cain and Abel

A helpful guide to teaching God’s Word with clarity, authority and care.

An adaptation by Nancy Everson of the original
Firm Foundations: Creation to Christ,
Trevor McIlwain with Nancy Everson
**What is Firm Foundations**

Foundational, chronological Bible teaching has been used successfully all over the world - but what is it? God, in His Word, has progressively revealed Himself and His plan of redemption within the context of human history. Foundational, chronological Bible teaching follows this same pattern — Firm Foundations lessons start “in the beginning” to reveal truth, systematically and panoramically through the Old and New Testaments.

- Key biblical themes that are crucial to a clear understanding of God’s Word are highlighted.
- The Bible is seen as a whole - the panorama of God’s working.
- Each lesson builds on the foundational truths laid in previous lessons.

Foundational, chronological Bible Teaching is a practical and proven approach for:
- Evangelism
- Grounding new believers
- Teaching maturing believers
- Planting churches.

Trevor McIlwain developed the Chronological Bible Teaching lessons as he worked cross-culturally with a people group in the Philippines. He saw the need to establish proper foundations, and that these foundations be biblically laid. As he 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 the basic outline that he had used with other missionaries who were also teaching cross-culturally. This outline eventually developed into detailed Bible lessons for evangelism and church planting. After effectively teaching the Firm Foundations Bible lessons, missionaries returned home with glowing testimonies. So enthusiastic were they about this method of teaching that pastors and other Bible teachers began to adapt the lessons originally written for cross-cultural evangelism and discipleship for use in churches and home Bible studies. Adaptations of the Firm Foundations materials have since been developed for many specific languages, cultural contexts, and age groups.
Lessons 1 – 12

with Review Sheets, Skits and Visuals

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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 of Book 1.
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.
Introducing the Bible

LESSON PREPARATION
This section is for you, the teacher.

The passages in the Scripture Reference column are for your own study in preparing for this lesson. Since they may contain concepts that run ahead of the lesson, they are not to be taught at this point.

Note: Please read carefully the note to teachers in the front of this book.

LESSON GOALS:
• To present the Bible as God’s Word — true, without error, and effective.

THIS LESSON SHOULD HELP THE STUDENTS:
• To understand where the Bible came from.
• To gain confidence in its authority.
• To gain respect for its uniqueness as God’s written Word.

PERSPECTIVE FOR THE TEACHER:

Many of us live in a society which was founded on biblical principles. Family structure, law and order, morality, social concerns, and many other basic elements of our culture were established by God and clearly recorded in His Word.

Though some people in our society have never set foot inside the door of a church, they have probably heard about the Bible; they may even own one. Other people may go to church week after week but never open their Bibles. Most people in our culture are not aware of the Bible; but sadly, many do not know what it says because they have never taken the time to read and study it for themselves.

A child’s initial view of the Bible is usually based upon how God’s Word is treated in his home. But even if the Bible has not been taught at home, children are wonderfully teachable and are eager to learn whatever you present. Since the Word is able to penetrate the minds of skeptical adults, how much more will it touch the hearts of children! As teachers we have before us the wonderful privilege of introducing to the children the Book of books, written by the Lord of lords, the tender, loving heavenly Father and Savior of the world. This is our opportunity to introduce to them the One God and the one Book that can transform their lives for all eternity.

Pray that God will open the minds and hearts of your students to learn and to believe God’s true and living Word, the Bible.  

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

Following is a list of books which may help you in preparing for this lesson:  

You may find additional reference materials such as these a great help in encouraging interested students. Children can ask amazing questions. Don’t be alarmed. The answers to their questions are in the Bible!

MEMORY VERSE
II Timothy 3:16

1 You will probably learn quite a bit about your students’ knowledge of the Bible as you go through this lesson. Some of the children may come from homes where the Bible is being taught on a regular basis. But other children may never have held a Bible in their hands.

Be very careful to help the children to find chapters and verses. If your class is large, enlist helpers to assist the children. It is extremely important that each child be able to see in his Bible what is being taught.

Consider even the most elementary question important. If a question is off the subject, you may have to tell a child that you must wait until a later lesson to fully answer. But let him know that you appreciate his interest. If it is appropriate, take time after class to answer his question.

Take every opportunity to encourage your students!
afraid to say, I don’t know the answer to your question, but I will try to find the answer for you. You may have to limit the discussion during class time, but be ready to offer additional information to an interested student.

NOTES REGARDING THE INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE:

The inerrancy of the Scriptures is an extremely important fact. It can be shown to be true through many avenues of proof, some of which are explored more fully in the resource materials listed on the previous page.

For us who teach, it is vital that we believe in the inerrancy of the Bible. If you are not clear on this issue yourself, it would be wise to study some of these resources so that your faith can rest more firmly in God’s true Word.

But for your students, some of whom may not even be believers, it is not essential that you prove or force the issue of inerrancy at this point.

The Bible itself is its own strongest proof. As stated in Hebrews 4:12, “...the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword....”

Children are usually very open and teachable. But you may find that someone has already taught them to doubt God’s Word. We need to communicate the facts in such a way that the children are really hearing God’s truth. Trust God to apply His Word to their hearts.

VISUALS:

- Chronological Picture No. 1, God’s Word Written
- Visual, Timeline
- Visual, Firm Foundations
- Visual, God’s Word Through Israel to the World
- Map or globe of the world; map of the Mideast and Israel

The maps could be from a current atlas so that the students may see that you are relating to present-day locations. (In future lessons you will use the Chronological Maps provided with these lessons. Chronological Map 1 may be used for this lesson if you do not have other maps available.)

- If possible, bring to class a few Bibles translated into other languages.
- Poster 1, Learning About God

This poster is in two sections which can be taped together or placed side by side on a bulletin board. You will use this poster for every lesson, so display it in a prominent location. If you are using a bulletin board, you may cover all the attributes of God with separate strips of colored paper and reveal each one when it is first introduced. (On each piece of colored paper mark in small penciled letters which attribute is underneath.) In this lesson, only one attribute is stressed, God communicates with man. You will be showing it on the poster as you cover outline point F. (Other attributes of God are alluded to in this lesson, but will be introduced in later lessons as they are brought out through the Scriptures being taught.)

SPECIAL PREPARATION:

- Make copies for your class of the Lesson 1 Review Sheet and Skit 1 (at the end of this lesson). Provide pencils for the children.
- Photocopy visuals (at end of lesson) — use as small posters or for overhead transparencies.
- Prepare for any activity you select from the Suggestions for Activities (at the end of this lesson). As you select activities, remember to allow sufficient time to teach the outlined lesson material.

LOOKING AHEAD:

Suggestion: Read through Lesson 4, “God Created the Heavens and the Earth,” and consider which reference materials you may want to locate or order and study.
Lesson 1: Introducing the Bible

ON TEACHING THIS LESSON:
You are carefully laying a scriptural foundation on which the Gospel will later be presented. Each lesson builds on previous lessons, so be sure to cover each point carefully.

DON'T COMPLICATE THE MESSAGE!
As you teach, keep in mind that this is a directed study — not an exhaustive survey of the Bible. Keep your lesson on track and moving ahead by limiting and directing any discussion.

Carefully follow the outline. Emphasize the doctrinal themes.

LESSON FORMAT: The center column below contains the lesson material to be taught to the students. The bold outline headings are only for reference and need not be spoken, as they are incorporated into the outlined material that follows. The material in the side columns is for the teacher's own reference and is not intended to be included in the lesson.

TO BE TAUGHT TO THE STUDENTS
(Center Column Only)

LESSON OUTLINE:

PERFORM Skit 1. Note: Uncle Don's part should be read by an adult.

A. Introduction
We are going to study the most wonderful book in the whole world — the Bible! 2
Does everyone here have a Bible? Hold up your Bible so I can see it.
Did you know that the Bible in your hand is like a personal letter sent to you from God?
Imagine! God has written this book to each one of us so that we can know Him personally!
(You may put your Bibles down now.)

B. God is the focus of our study.*
That's why God gave us the Bible — He wants us to know Him!
— God is the central character of the Bible.
— As we study, you will learn what He is really like:
  Who He is.
  What He does.
  What He is like — His personality.

C. We will study the Bible chronologically.
The Bible is also the true story of history as seen from God's viewpoint.
We are going to study the Bible in the order in which things really took place.
— Do you know what was there before the beginning? 3
— Do you know where angels came from?
— Where is God right now?

2 Before you begin, make sure that every child has a Bible.

* Remember that these lettered, bold outline headings are not to be spoken; the thought is included in the lesson text.

3 Do not discuss answers to these questions, but do give the children opportunity to think and to express themselves briefly. If they try to answer, agree with them if they are right, but don't correct them if they are wrong. Just tell them that we can only guess, but God has the true answers in the Bible.
In the Bible, God tells us the answers to these and many other questions!

*Suggested Visual:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bible Stories We Will Study on the Time Line of History</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other Events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

— Explain:

*A time line shows things in the order in which they happened. We will be stretching out the Bible time line and putting each story we study into its place on that line.*

*Studying this way is a little like stretching out a clothesline and then hanging clothes on it.*

*You may already know about certain details of the Bible but not yet have a clear understanding of where they fit into the overall picture.*

*Maybe you have heard about Abraham and Moses and David. But who came first? Was it Moses or was it Abraham? [Abraham]*

*As we study, you will see how these people and many others fit into history, and you will also see where other things fit in between the things we study.*

*We won’t study every story along the line, but we will choose certain stories or events in history that will make all the rest seem to fall into place.*

*We are going to begin our next lesson in Genesis, which is where God’s story of history begins.*

The book of Genesis is the **foundation** of the Bible.

**D. We will be laying firm foundations for understanding the Bible.**

— Explain:

*How many of you have seen a house being built? Do the builders start with the roof?*

*No! First they lay the foundation.*

*The foundation is the very bottom part, usually made of cement or stone.*

*It must be very firm and strong so it can hold the weight of the whole building.*

*Then the house is built on top of a firm foundation, one piece at a time.*

*Suggested Visual:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Upper Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIRM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOUNDATION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If the foundations aren’t first built properly, the rest of the house cannot be strong.

For this reason, it is very important that you attend every lesson.
— Everything we study will be important and will become part of the foundation for our future studies.
— If you miss a class, you will find it more difficult to understand later lessons.

So try not to miss any classes! We want to learn together.

E. A look at the Bible

Now let’s open our Bibles.

We are going to be using our Bibles every time we meet, so let’s begin to learn how to use them.
— Table of Contents
— Old Testament
— New Testament
— Chapters, verse numbers
— Footnotes, various helps.

The Bible is God’s Word.
— When we talk about the Bible being God’s Word, we are talking about the text of the Bible, not the various notes that men have added.

The Bible means a lot to me.
— Example:

“The Bible is my favorite book. I know that when I read God’s Word, I’ll find the help I need for every day. The Bible tells me what God is like. He’s wonderful! The more I read, the more I want to read and to know Him better.”

F. The Bible is the most important book in the whole world because it is the Word of GOD.

Theme: God is greater than all and more important than all; He is the highest authority.

Theme: God communicates with man.

READ II Timothy 3:16: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God . . . .”

God spoke to men called prophets the exact messages He wanted written down.
— Sometimes He spoke out loud.
— Sometimes He spoke to them in visions.
— Sometimes He just put the message directly into their minds.
— God caused the prophets to write exactly what He spoke to them.

READ II Peter 1:20,21.

The Bible is not men’s ideas, but God’s own Word.
God gave His words to men.
We will begin our “LEARNING ABOUT GOD” poster with this: “God communicates with man.”
God communicates with us; that is, He tells us what we need to know!
ON THE POSTER “LEARNING ABOUT GOD” POINT TO “GOD COMMUNICATES WITH MAN.”

Suggested Visual:
This picture shows a prophet writing down the message given him by God. The prophet is writing on a scroll, a roll of parchment or leather on which text was written in ink. In those days, scrolls were used instead of paper. The scroll could be rolled up and stored, just like we keep a book on the shelf.

CHRONOLOGICAL PICTURE NO 1, “GOD’S WORD WRITTEN”
No other book in the world was written this way — with God telling men exactly what to write.
God is the author of the Bible.
God used more than 40 men to write down His Words.
The Bible was not written all at once — it took 1,600 years for all of the Bible to be written down!

Theme: God never changes.
But the Bible reads like one book from beginning to end, because God is its one Author.

The Bible fits together as one Book, even though God used over 40 men and took over 1,600 years to write it.
God never changes, and He just kept on telling men what to write until everything He wanted to tell us was written down.
— The only answer for the unity of the Bible is one author — God!

G. The Bible is God’s message to the world, which He gave through the Jewish people.

Theme: God communicates with man.

Theme: God is greater than all and more important than all; He is the highest authority.
All but one of the men whom God used to write His Word were Jewish. (Luke was apparently a Gentile — a Gentile is anyone who is not Jewish.)
SHOW MAP OF WORLD, MIDEAST, ISRAEL.
God gave His message through the Jewish people, but His message is for the whole world.
In Isaiah 45:22 God says, “Look unto me...all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”

Suggested Visual:

— Explain:

You might say that Israel was like God’s megaphone or microphone, broadcasting God’s message to the whole world.

H. The Bible has been passed down to us intact and with extreme accuracy.

Theme: God never changes.

[Give each child a copy of the Lesson 1 Review Sheet. As you share the following information, help the children to trace God’s Word down the review sheet.]

Originally, God’s prophets wrote down God’s exact message. As the original writings wore out from use and age, new copies had to be made.

Copying was done with extreme care.

— The number of letters in a book were counted and the middle letter of a book was given. Also, the number of words were counted and the middle word was marked. 11

— Though every word was hand copied, there are more ancient copies of the Bible than of any other ancient book.

— All of the very old manuscripts or copies that have been found say the same thing. The only differences are tiny details that do not affect the meaning.

Example:

In 1947, about 15 miles from Jerusalem, a shepherd boy threw a rock into a cave, hoping to scare out one of his animals that had strayed into the cave. He heard the sound of pottery breaking and went inside the cave to investigate. To his amazement, he saw pottery urns holding ancient scrolls. He reported his find, and when scholars investigated, they found hundreds of scrolls. These scrolls later being called the Dead Sea Scrolls had been hidden in area caves by a religious group sometime during the first century before Christ.

At the time of this discovery, translators were using manuscripts which had been copied around 900 A.D. When scholars compared the Dead Sea Scrolls with the manuscripts which they had been using, there were no meaningful differences! Though separated by 1,000 years, the two copies said the same thing. God preserves His Word.

How did we get the Bible in our language?