

Essential Christian Doctrine 10 Week Program Overview

Goals and Behavioral Changes for the Christian Foundation Program

This program ensures that participants can confidently affirm and articulate their beliefs, effectively engage in evangelism, and actively participate in the Church's life and ministry. The program's goal is to ensure that all new members, regardless of their background in the Church, level of Christian education, or prior experience, have a comprehensive understanding of the Church's statement of faith and doctrine. Therefore, participation in the foundational training program is compulsory for all community members.

Week 1-2 Goals of Learning about the Trinity: God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

The goal is to provide participants with a solid theological foundation, enabling the skills to defend the orthodox Christian belief in the Trinity. Participants will be able to clarify the Concept of the Trinity by understanding that the Doctrine of the Trinity is the cornerstone of Christian theology. They will understand that God eternally exists as three persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each entirely God, yet there is one God. They will learn how Scripture teaches the concept of the Trinity, Learning to reference key Biblical passages that identify each person of the Trinity as God: the Father (Philippians 1:2, John 17:1-3), the Son (John 1:1-2, 14; John 20:24-28), and the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11).

Participants will be able to identify and dispel misunderstandings about the nature of God as presented in the Trinity. They will address and correct theological errors and heresies that have historically arisen regarding the Trinity. Participants will be able to clarify that the Trinity does not mean there are three gods but rather one God in three persons. They will understand the distinct yet unified roles and attributes of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Through achieving these goals, believers will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Doctrine of The Trinity, reinforcing their faith and ability to convey this central tenet of Christianity to others.

Weeks 3-4 Goals of Learning about the Bible

The goal is to provide an understanding of the Bible and to affirm its divine inspiration, reliability, and authority. The aim is for participants to defend the Bible as the authoritative Word of God confidently. They will establish that the Bible is entirely truthful in all its teachings, free from falsehood, fraud, or deceit, as affirmed by the Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy. Believers will understand that inerrancy directly results from the Bible's full inspiration, ensuring accurate and reliable knowledge of God. They will use the Bible as the foundational source for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness, equipping believers for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Additionally, they will provide clear guidance on the Church's mission and practices through Scripture and learn how God has revealed Himself in Scripture, which is essential for proper worship (John 4:24). Scripture contains all necessary words for salvation, trust, and obedience, holding ultimate authority in all matters of faith and practice (2 Timothy 3:15-17, 2 Peter 1:21, 1 Corinthians 2:12-13, Deuteronomy 4:2, Deuteronomy 29:29, Exodus 24:3-4, 1 Corinthians 14:37, 1 Thessalonians 2:13).

The goal is to equip participants with a robust theological foundation, enabling them to confidently share and discuss their faith with others. The desired behavioral change will be that participants will be more able to explain and defend Christian doctrines.

The second goal is to encourage participants to engage in church life by encouraging active participation in the church community, utilizing spiritual gifts to serve others and glorify God. The behavioral change will be that participants will be more involved in church activities, including worship services, small groups, and ministry opportunities. Participants will actively engage in evangelism, sharing the gospel with non-believers through words and actions. The aim is to cultivate a passion for sharing the gospel, emphasizing the responsibility of every Christian to spread the message of salvation.

The third goal is authentic worship, to instill a comprehensive understanding of worship that permeates all aspects of life. The aim is to have a behavioral change when participants engage in prayer that encompasses not just corporate gatherings but also personal worship through giving, serving, and living a worship lifestyle.

The fourth goal is to promote the effective use of spiritual gifts, ensuring they are exercised in a way that builds up the body of Christ. The aim is for participants to appropriately identify and use their spiritual gifts within the Church for edification and service.

The fifth goal is to provide an understanding of future events, encouraging participants to live holy and purposeful lives considering Christ's second coming and the final judgment. The aim is that Participants will have a biblically informed perspective on eschatology, leading to a life lived in anticipation of Christ's return. By achieving these goals and fostering these behavioral changes, the Christian Foundation Program aims to produce mature, knowledgeable, and active believers who are well-equipped to contribute to their Church's growth and health and impact the world for Christ.

Week 5 Goals of Learning about Salvation

The goal is to explain the fall of man, atonement, and the necessity of a Savior. Participants will understand the doctrine of salvation. Participants will articulate the need for salvation and the process of salvation. The aim is to provide an understanding of the universal sinfulness of humanity. To help participants understand that through Adam, all humanity sinned and is therefore separated from God and deserving of His wrath (Romans 5:12-21, Psalm 51:5, Romans 6:23). Participants will be able to comprehend the necessity of a Savior due to humanity's universal unrighteousness and the impending wrath of God on the sinful and disobedient (Romans 6:23, Romans 1:18, 1 John 1:5-6, Romans 7:14, 24.).

The goal is to explain the biblical teaching that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man, embodying divine attributes and human weaknesses (John 4:6, Mark 2:5-12, Hebrews 4:15, 1 Peter 1:17-19, 2 Corinthians 5:21). Participants will be able to understand that Jesus' death was both penal bearing the penalty for sin and substitutionary dying in place of sinners, fulfilling the righteous requirements for atonement (Hebrews 9:22, Hebrews 9:11-15, Romans 3:9-11, 1 John 4:10, Hebrews 9:14, Hebrews 9:26, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, Revelation 5:9). They will be able too affirm the belief in the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ as a cornerstone of the Christian

faith. The aim is to define salvation as spiritual and eternal deliverance for those who repent and have faith, emphasizing its completeness and security (Acts 4:12, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Ephesians 1:13, Ephesians 2:5, 8, James 1:21, Romans 10:9-10). Participants will learn the culmination of Christ's death and resurrection, making salvation available to those chosen by God.

Week 6 Goals of Learning about the Church

The goal is to help participants understand the Nature and Purpose of the Church. The aim is to recognize that through the Church, God executes His redemptive plan and displays His manifold wisdom (Ephesians 3:1-10). Participants will understand the Church's ministry, such as God has called believers to minister to Him through Worship (Col. 3:16, Eph. 5:16-19). He has called believers to minister to fellow believers through Nurturing (Col. 1:28; Eph. 4:11-13). He has called believers to minister to the world through Evangelism and Mercy (Matt. 28:19, Luke 6:35-36, Matt. 5:16). Participants will learn that God ordained diversity within the body of Christ to meet the unique needs of the local communities of the people they live among (1 Corinthians 12:1-11, Matt. 5:38-48, Matt. 25:34-40).

Participants will be able to identify true churches by teaching the true gospel of Jesus Christ and their regular administration of holy ordinances, such as communion and baptism. Christ instituted Holy Communion on the eve of His death (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20). The observance of baptism is a command from the Lord Jesus Christ and is upheld by the teaching and practice of His Apostles (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:1-11).

By achieving these goals, participants will understand the Church's multifaceted nature as presented in the Bible. They will be equipped to articulate the Church's purpose, its biblical foundation, and the diverse roles and contexts in which it operates, enhancing their faith and ability to contribute to the Church's mission.

Week 7 Goals of Worship

The goal of worship is to help participants learn that worship is a sacred act of glorifying God in His presence with genuine sincerity and reverence. Genuine worship is the outpouring of the heart in response to a revelation of who God is. It is Christ-centered and divinely motivated (Colossians 3:16-17, 1 Chronicles 16:7-9, Psalm 8:1, 3-5, 9). They will learn that every believer has full access to God through Jesus Christ, so they can worship Him and fulfill His purposes in ministry (1 Peter 2:5, 9).

Participants will learn that the Church must conduct worship services that are relevant, orderly, and consistent with biblical instructions from both the Old and New Testaments (John 4:23-24, Hebrews 10:23-25, 1 Corinthians 14:40). Participants will learn that worship is structured to honor God and spiritually uplift the congregation, fostering a sense of reverence and unity among believers. They will be able to define acceptable worship and understand the role of giving. By adhering to various acceptable worship practices outlined in Scripture, such as prostration, praise through song and dance, reading Scripture, giving offerings, teaching and preaching the gospel, laying on of hands, prayer, administration of spiritual gifts, and participation in ordinances, the Church enhances the worship experience. These practices facilitate more profound spiritual growth and expression of faith (Hebrews 12:28; Job 1:20; Matthew 2:11; Psalm 134:2; Psalm 150:4;

Nehemiah 8:5-6; Proverbs 3:9; Philippians 4:15-16, 18; Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 4:11-13; Acts 13:1-3; Acts 1:12-14; Acts 4:23-31; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Psalm 95:6; Psalm 150:3-5).

Week 8 Goals of Evangelism

The primary goal of evangelism is to fulfill God's ordained method of teaching His plan of redemption through preaching the gospel. This involves sharing the message that salvation is found exclusively in Jesus Christ, compelling individuals to confess and believe in Him for their eternal salvation (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Romans 1:16). As individuals hear and respond to the Gospel message, they experience a spiritual rebirth, forgiveness of sins, and reconciliation with God (Romans 10:9-10, Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 Peter 1:3-5).

The aim is to equip participants to fulfill the Great Commission, irrespective of possessing the specific gift of evangelism. Believers are called to share their faith actively, boldly proclaiming Jesus Christ as the world's Savior and guiding others toward a personal relationship with Him (Acts 1:8, 2 Timothy 4:5, 1 Peter 3:15). Participants will learn that the responsibility of evangelism extends to the family unit, which serves as the primary context for spreading the gospel and nurturing faith. Godly families are called to raise their children in the knowledge of God's Word, fostering a reverence for Him and ensuring the continuity of faith from generation to generation (Deuteronomy 6:4-7, Ephesians 6:4, Psalm 78:4-7).

Participants will ultimately learn that evangelism seeks to transform communities and nations by bringing individuals into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Through the proclamation of the gospel, hearts are changed, lives are transformed, and societies are impacted as God's redemptive plan unfolds (Acts 8:4, Acts 17:6). As more individuals come to faith in Christ, communities and cultures are positively impacted. The collective witness of transformed lives is a testimony to God's power and love, influencing others to consider and accept the Gospel message (Acts 2:47, Acts 17:6, Matthew 5:16).

Evangelism leads to the growth and maturation of new believers in their faith journey. Through discipleship efforts within the local Church and mentoring relationships, new believers are nurtured in biblical truths, spiritual practices, and Christian living (Matthew 28:19-20, Colossians 1:28-29, 2 Timothy 2:2).

Week 9 Goals Spiritual Gifts

Participants will learn that the Holy Spirit's primary function includes manifesting God's active presence, distributing spiritual gifts, and revealing God's presence in believers' lives. As a seal, the Holy Spirit marks believers as God's own, confirming their salvation through inner testimony. Additionally, the Holy Spirit serves as a deposit and guarantee of the future blessings believers will experience in eternity, fostering a deep, intimate relationship with God (2 Corinthians 5:4-5, Galatians 4:4-6, 1 John 4:12-13).

The Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts to believers to empower them for Christian ministry and demonstrate God's active presence within the Church and the world. These gifts testify to God's faithfulness and grace, confirming the believer's relationship with Him and preparing them for eternal blessings in His presence.

Participants will learn that the spiritual gifts listed in Scripture are actively available within the universal body of Christ until the return of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:4-7, 1 Corinthians 12:28-31, Ephesians 4:11-13). Therefore, believers are encouraged to earnestly desire spiritual gifts and allow the Holy Spirit to distribute them according to His will and purpose (1 Corinthians 12:31).

Participants will learn that these gifts empower believers for Christian service, including preaching the gospel and demonstrating the love that builds up the Church and proclaims God's goodness to the world (Acts 1:6-8, Romans 12:4-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11).

Week 10 Goals of Eschatology

Participants can comprehend future events outlined in Scripture, known collectively as eschatology, which encompasses the return of Christ, the Millennium, and the final judgment. These teachings are central to understanding God's ultimate plan for humanity's redemption and eternal destiny.

Participants will learn about God's judgment for all humanity: God will evaluate all people based on their deeds. Those who have placed their trust in Jesus Christ will be granted immortal bodies and everlasting life. Conversely, those who have disobeyed God will receive immortal bodies and face everlasting condemnation in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15; Matthew 25:31-34, 41, 46). God will assess each believer's Christian service at the judgment seat of Christ. Rewards and crowns will be distributed based on the faithfulness and dedication demonstrated during their earthly lives (2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 2 Timothy 4:6-8). Scripture assures believers of the judgment of unbelievers, the reward of believers, and their eternal dwelling with Christ (Hebrews 9:27-28).

While the exact timing remains undisclosed for Christ's Second Coming (Matthew 24:44; Mark 13:32-33), believers universally affirm its certainty and eagerly anticipate His return. His return will involve a sudden, personal, visible, and bodily appearance (Acts 1:10-11; John 14:2-3). This church body adheres to historic premillennialism, believing in Christ's imminent return before a literal thousand-year reign on earth. This period, known as the Millennial Reign of Christ, is derived from Revelation 20:1-5 and marks a time when Christ will establish His kingdom. The goal is to instill hope and assurance among believers. His doctrine of eschatology emphasizes God's sovereignty over human destinies and underscores the importance of faithful service to Him.