

FOUNDATIONS, part 1

TBLC Week 1

★God is Our Reference Point

1. Who is God?
2. What is a Reference Point?

► Who is God?

RC Sproul: What makes God different from people, from the stars, from earthquakes, and from any other creaturely thing is that God—and God alone—has aseity; He alone exists by His own power. No one made Him or caused Him. He exists in and of Himself. This is a quality that no creature shares. People are not self-existent; neither are cars or stars. Only God has the concept of self-existence.

Revelation 4:11 “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power **for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.**”

Psalms 33:6, 9 By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host...For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.

Exodus 20:11 For in six days **the Lord made heaven and earth**, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

John 1:3 **All things were made through him**, and without him was not anything made that was made.

Acts 14:15 Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things **to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them.**

Acts 17:24 The **God who made the world and everything in it**, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man,

Col. 1:16 For **by him all things were created**, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.

Revelation 10:6 and swore by him who lives forever and ever, **who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay,**

Revelation 14:7 And he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of his judgment has come, and **worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the springs of water.**”

Psalm 89:11-12 The heavens are yours; the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it, you have founded them. The north and the south, you have created them; Tabor and Hermon joyously praise your name.

Design and Ownership also implies His rights and responsibilities.

Isaiah 64:8 But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

Jeremiah 18:6 “Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter does?” declares the Lord. “Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel.

Job 38:39-41 “Can you hunt the prey for the lion or satisfy the appetite of the young lions, ⁴⁰ when they crouch in their dens or lie in wait in their thicket?

⁴¹ Who provides for the raven its prey, when its young ones cry to God for help, and wander about for lack of food?

- **Matthew 6:26** Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?
- He cares for the birds...how much more he cares for us made in his image!

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

► What is a Reference Point?

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “reference point” as

- **something *that is used to judge or understand something else***

The Oxford Learner’s dictionary defines “reference point” as

- **a standard *by which something can be judged or compared***

Examples of a reference point:

1. Art –
2. Scholastic papers –
3. Orchestra –

→Group Discussion

If God is not your reference point how would you assess the situation and how would you give advice to someone in the following situation?

- Children are wayward/thriving
- Good Health/Bad health
- Lost a job/Promotion given
- Lots of children/Barren
- Not married/Wonderful marriage
- National election results
- Forgiving Enemies
- Financial Loss
- Unfaithful Spouse
- Discord amongst friends
- Discord in the church
- LGBTQ questions
- Obeying Government

★His Word is Our Authority

►What does the word Authority mean?

- the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience.
- power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior

This is an authority that is for our good - in our submission we receive back from it so much!

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is living and active, ... discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

1 John 1:3-4 writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

Psalms 119 declare the goodness of the word of God...lamp, light, brings understanding, wisdom, keeps us from sinning, comforts us, strengthens us, revives us, upholds us, causes rejoicing, etc...

From the shorter catechism we understand:

The Scriptures principally teach what man is to believe concerning God and what duty God requires of man.

►The Word of God Teaches what to Believe concerning God.

- Gives us His Story – understand that the Word of God is about HIM...not us
- Incommunicable Attributes – He must be our reference Point
- Communicable attributes – What attributes does He share with us – where he longs to conform us to His image.
 - **Romans 8:29** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.
 - **Ephesians 4:15** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to *grow up in every way* into him who is the head, into Christ
 - **Ephesians 4:24** and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

- **1 Corinthians 15:45 -49** Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

► **Scripture also teaches what duty God requires of man.**

Ecclesiastes 12:13 states, “The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.”

- Fear of the Lord

Psalms 147:11 but the Lord takes pleasure in those who fear him in those who hope in his steadfast love.

Deuteronomy 5:29 Oh that they had such a heart as this always, to fear me and to keep all my commandments, that it might go well with them and with their descendants forever!

Deuteronomy 10:12, 20-21 And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul...²⁰ You shall fear the Lord your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. ²¹ He is your praise. He is your God, who has done for you these great and terrifying things that your eyes have seen.

Revelation 15:4 Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

- Keep His commandments

Psalms 119:60 I hasten and do not delay to keep your commandments.

Psalms 112:1 Praise the Lord! Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in his commandments!

John 14:15 If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

Luke 11:28 But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!”

James 1:22-25 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a

man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵ But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

► **Example in action.**

Genesis 3:1-7

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” ² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’”

⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

➔ **Group Discussion.**

Group back to earlier discussion...apply God as your reference point and His word as Your authority. How do you assess the situations and advise you would give?

➔ **Homework:**

Prayerfully ask yourself if God is your reference point and His word is your authority in:

Family relationships and situations

Friendships and situations

Work relationships and situations

Personal situations of health, finance, fears, etc...