

THE
PURPLE
BOOK

**THE
PURPLE
BOOK**

**Biblical Foundations
for Building
Strong Disciples**

**RICE BROOKS
STEVE MURRELL**

ZONDERVAN®

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49530 USA

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The Purple Book

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Published previously as BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

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Requests for information should be addressed to:

Zondervan, *Grand Rapids, Michigan 49530*

Library of Congress Control Number: 2006927025

ISBN-10: 0-310-93600-4

ISBN-13: 978-0-310-93600-8

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Interior design by Rob Monacelli

Printed in the United States of America

06 07 08 09 10 11 • 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

A Letter from Peter Furler

lead singer, newsboys

Dear Friend,

There was a time in my life when, though believing Jesus was the Way, I still felt lost. Though believing he was the Truth, I did not have much truth in me. And even though I believed he was the Life, I could not find the life he had for me. Every storm kept me running. Every voice in my heart claimed to be true. Every battle that took place in my mind just left me dazed and confused. I believe this is where the enemy of the kingdom of God would love for us to remain: a state where we know little of what God has said, leaving us captive to our thoughts and imaginations, robbing us not only of having a strong foundation, but of even having the revelation of what it is we are meant to be building.

So why are people all over the world doing *The Purple Book*? From students and scholars to parents, kids, rock stars, and sport stars, I believe it's because they are looking for a foundation that no storm will prevail against and a heart that can test its thoughts and attitudes by being confirmed or conflicted through the knowledge of the Word of God ... because they have found that a battle should not be fought in the mind. But rather, like Jesus in the desert (Matthew 4), it is won by the written Word of God spoken out of our mouths.

Will you do *The Purple Book*? Do it for your families and friends. Do it for your church and your nation. Most importantly, do it for your God, so you know his voice and what he has said about the things you believe. Parents, go through *The Purple Book* with your families. Pastors and youth leaders, go through *The Purple Book* with the people God has placed in your care. Friends, go through *The Purple Book* together, and it will change your life.

As I share in my testimony, although I grew up in the church, a lot of these foundational principles were not grounded in my life. Memorize and meditate on the Scriptures daily, and teach others to do the same. Together, we will make this generation a people full of the knowledge of God's Word—a people with a strong foundation worth handing down to the next generation.

Finally, ask God to give you a love for his Word. God said, "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know" (Jeremiah 33:3 TNIV).

His purpose is our food. His Word will reveal his purpose.

Love,

Pete

CONTENTS

Preface	9
1. Sin & Salvation	11
The Original Story	
The Results of Sin	
God's Solution for Sin: Jesus' Death and Resurrection	
Receiving God's Gift: A New Heart	
Grace Through Faith	
2. Lordship & Obedience	21
Jesus Is Lord	
The Narrow Door	
Lordship and Relationships	
Can You Pass the Test?	
3. Repentance & Baptism	30
What Shall We Do?	
Repentance: Turning from Sin	
Repentance: Turning to God	
Water Baptism	
4. The Holy Spirit & Spiritual Gifts.	40
Who Is the Holy Spirit?	
The Fruit of the Spirit	
Spiritual Gifts	
The Baptism in the Holy Spirit	
5. Spiritual Hunger & God's Word	48
The Authority and Power of the Word	
The Benefits of the Word	
Spiritual Hunger	
Obedience	
6. Discipleship & Leadership.	56
The Call: Make Disciples	
The Cost: Absolute Surrender	
Discipleship and the Cross	

Christian Character
Discipleship and Leadership

7. Spiritual Family & Church Life67
 - The Victorious Church
 - The Body of Christ
 - Church Leadership
 - Church Discipline
 - Holy Communion
8. Prayer & Worship78
 - Personal Prayer
 - The Power of Prayer
 - Corporate Prayer
 - A Biblical Prayer List
 - Worship
9. Faith & Hope87
 - What Is Faith?
 - Saving Faith
 - Faith and Obedience
 - Mountain-Moving Faith
 - Faith and Hope
10. Biblical Prosperity
& Generosity97
 - The Dangers of Wealth
 - Biblical Principles of Prosperity
 - Putting God First
 - Extreme Generosity
11. Evangelism & World Missions . . . 105
 - Everyone Is a Minister
 - Boldness
 - Spiritual Conflict and Evangelism
 - Miracles, Signs, and Wonders
 - To the Ends of the Earth
12. Resurrection & Judgment 115
 - Death and Resurrection
 - The Justice of God and the Sinfulness of Humanity
 - The Judgment of Sinners
 - The Judgment of Saints

Preface

Anyone who wants God's best for their life must begin by building a strong foundation. Jesus said as much when he declared, "As for those who come to me and hear my words and put them into practice, I will show you what they are like. They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built" (Luke 6:47–48 TNIV). He then contrasted this wise man with one who was foolish, who heard but failed to act and found himself living in a house built on sand.

Both had their works tested by the storms of life—storms that come even more often in today's uncertain world. And in this real-life game of *Survivor*, only one person was left standing. The large number of damaged and/or collapsed lives in today's church is testimony to the pressing need to once again build strong foundations.

Several years ago I took a team of students to the island of Guam for an evangelistic outreach. Checking into my hotel, I was given what would later prove to be a prophetic sign. "Sir," the clerk said as she handed me my key, "your room is 911." Everyone joked about how I would be getting all the emergency calls.

Two days later, one of the century's worst earthquakes—8.2 on the Richter scale—jolted the island. Even more incredible, it lasted for sixty bone-chilling seconds. Inside room 911, the world seemed to explode. The television hurtled to the floor. Slammed from its perch, the sliding glass door shattered into a million pieces.

We ran for the fire escape only to find the route blocked. With nowhere else to go, we stood on the balcony, riding out the most terrifying minute of our lives. With each tremor came a growing certainty that the building would soon collapse. We were about to die!

Suddenly, just as it felt like the hotel would rip in half, all motion ceased. We found a way out and made our way to the street, singing the praises of our God. Never had I found a more humble audience and had an easier time telling strangers about the Lord!

The next day we toured the island to assess the damage. One of the images that stood out was a brand-new hotel now on the verge of collapse. Two of its floors had disintegrated, and the rest of the structure tilted like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Before the quake, it appeared perfectly sound. But the storm of this earthquake revealed what was really there beneath the surface. Because the foundations were faulty, the entire building had to be torn down.

Thankfully, the engineers who designed our hotel did not make the same mistakes. Though it cost them time and money, they took into account the fact that they were building in an earthquake zone, designing and building the foundations accordingly.

There is an important lesson in all of this. We, too, live along a "fault line." The tectonic plates of sin are pushing hard against us. From the Middle East to our

middle schools—everywhere—we see massive upheaval. If we are going to build lives that will stand, not just any foundation will do.

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. — 1 Corinthians 3:11 (TNIV)

We must dig down deep and tear out everything that is hostile to Christ. We must hear his words—particularly those that deal with the very foundations of faith—and obey.

The book you hold in your hands will teach you these great foundational truths. It will help bring alive the words that the apostle Paul shared with a young man who was also seeking to build his life upon the rock.

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that all God's people may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. — 2 Timothy 3:16–17 (TNIV)

Most of us like the teaching part. But far fewer of us are thrilled about being rebuked or corrected. The fact is, however, that it is the latter that separates the winners from the losers. There is no way to be equipped for a good work—or a good life—without God's Word doing a deep work in us. And there is no way to be a disciple without being disciplined. Who has ever heard of a successful athlete, soldier, musician, or scientist who has not subjected themselves to a strict regimen of training and discipline? And so it must be for the children of light.

We are living in one of the greatest times in church history. Technology has drawn the world so tightly together that we can realistically hope to reach every nation and tribe and language with the Gospel. But with this great opportunity comes an even greater responsibility. It is vital that the faith we preach is the one that we live out—in all its powerful, life-and-nation-transforming glory.

The early church turned their world upside down. They reached multitudes without jets, computers, the Internet—not even a sound system! What spoke the loudest was their lives. People saw the transforming power of Christ in the men and women who left everything to follow him. The fault lines that ran through the Roman Empire and the many earthquakes (both literal and spiritual) that followed, only tested their foundations and helped them stand when everything else around them came crashing down.

Let us pray for a new generation to come forth, pledging their all, doing their part to help turn the world back to righteousness.

Rice Broocks
Founder, Every Nation Ministries



SIN & SALVATION



CHAPTER ONE

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. . . . Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. . . . All things have been created through him and for him.

— Genesis 1:1; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16 (TNIV)



The earth, humanity — all that we see around us — had a beginning.

God declared each phase of creation “good” — until he created the first man, Adam, and said that it was “not good” for him to be alone.

So Eve, the first woman, was created, and the original couple was given everything to enjoy. They were only forbidden to eat the fruit of one tree: the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

The fatal decision that followed and its tragic results have affected all of human history. Humanity would pass down this fatal flaw, this inner corrup-

tion, from generation to generation. The power of evil and darkness would have prevailed — except for God’s intervention. His plan of salvation, of deliverance from evil’s power, began to unfold in that very Garden of Eden. *This* is the primary story of the entire Bible.

LESSON 1

THE ORIGINAL STORY

1. What was creation like in the beginning? Genesis 1

v. 10 _____

v. 12 _____

v. 18 _____

v. 21 _____

v. 25 _____

2. How many commands did God give Adam and Eve? Genesis 2:17

3. What was God’s command to the first human beings? Genesis 2:16–17

Read Genesis 3:1–13 to find out what happened next.

4. How did Adam and Eve respond to God’s command? Genesis 3:6–7

5. In light of this, do you think you would have responded any differently?

Think about what God attempted to shield Adam and Eve from: the knowledge of evil. What loving parents today don’t do everything possible to protect their children from dangerous material — on television, on the Internet or anywhere else?

6. Who tempted Eve? Genesis 3:1

Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit — in essence saying to God, “We don’t need you or your rules.” They disobeyed God. They *sinned*.

7. How did Adam and Eve react after their eyes were opened and they realized they were naked? Genesis 3

v. 7 _____

v. 8 _____

v. 10 _____

8. Why do you think they reacted this way?

9. How did God respond to Adam and Eve’s sin? Genesis 3:8–9

Notice the two very different responses to humanity’s sin:

- Humanity covered up and hid from God.
- God sought humanity.

Things have not changed much since the beginning. After thousands of years and billions of people, human beings still hide from God — and God still seeks. This is the starting point for understanding salvation.

Application & Reflection

What did you learn from this lesson? How will you apply it to your life?

LESSON 2

THE RESULTS OF SIN

The act of disobeying God is called sin. One definition of sin is to “miss the mark,” as when you fail to hit the target in a sporting event.

Obviously the Bible’s understanding of sin is much more serious than that. In fact, Scripture has a couple different ways of expressing this idea. Sin is sometimes described as a “trespass,” something that involves crossing forbidden lines or boundaries that God sets up for our protection.

The concept of “iniquity” speaks of sin’s most troubling and destructive result: to twist and pervert our inner nature. This is gravely serious because the Bible says God’s nature is “holy” — that is, completely free from evil or defect, absolutely pure in love and goodness.

1. What state does the Bible describe us as being in? Ephesians 2:1

2. Why ultimately is our sin so serious to God? Leviticus 11:44

3. What does iniquity do to our relationship with God? Isaiah 59:1–2

4. Describe sinful humanity’s desperate condition. Romans 3:9–20, 23

5. Describe the impact sin has on our heart. Jeremiah 17:9

6. What are the “wages” of sin? Romans 6:23

7. What does the Bible say happens after we die? Hebrews 9:27

8. How does the Bible describe eternal judgment?

Matthew 25:41 _____

Revelation 20:11–15 _____

Revelation 21:8 _____

9. What does Paul, the writer of Romans, call himself? Romans 7:24

In Romans 7, Paul describes his own state and cries out on behalf of all humanity with the most important question ever asked: “Who will rescue me from this body of death?” Humanity’s deepest need is for salvation — not just from the evil in the world, but from the evil in our own hearts.

Application & Reflection

Obviously God takes sin very seriously. What about you? What do you think you deserve for your sin?

LESSON 3

GOD’S SOLUTION FOR SIN: JESUS’ DEATH AND RESURRECTION

The penalty for sin is death, both spiritual and physical. God’s ultimate solution for sin was foreshadowed in the original story. After Adam and Eve sinned, they tried to hide themselves with their own covering — and humanity has been hiding from God ever since. God, however, provided the real covering, and he did so by spilling the blood of an innocent animal.

The concept of sacrifice (the idea that because of sin, someone has to pay the penalty) is seen throughout the Bible. Sin was forgiven only as a result of shedding blood, a sacrifice offered in the place of sinful human beings. The sacrifice had to be one without defect.

1. What is necessary for the forgiveness of sins? Hebrews 9:22

2. How did God cover Adam and Eve's first sin? Genesis 3:21

3. How were "unclean" things made "clean"? Hebrews 9:22

4. Can the blood of animals ultimately take away our sins? Hebrews 10:4

Read Isaiah 53.

5. Why would the promised Savior be "pierced"? Isaiah 53:5

6. How does the prophet Isaiah say we will be healed? Isaiah 53:5

7. How did John the Baptist, the last great prophet before Jesus, introduce Jesus publicly? John 1:29

8. What did the prophet Isaiah predict God would do? Isaiah 53:6

9. What does Jesus' blood — his sacrificial death — do for us?

Romans 5:9 _____

Ephesians 1:7 _____

Ephesians 2:13 _____

1 John 1:7 _____

Revelation 1:5 _____

10. What did Jesus do for us on the cross?

1 Corinthians 15:3–4 _____

2 Corinthians 5:21 _____

Galatians 3:13–14 _____

1 Peter 2:24 _____

11. According to the Bible, what makes Jesus unique that he can do this for us?

John 1:18 _____

Colossians 1:15–20 _____

Hebrews 4:15 _____

Jesus' blood—his sacrificial death—is God's solution for humanity's sin. He pays the penalty for your sin. He wants to wipe the slate clean—forgiveness. But Jesus didn't just stay in the grave. He rose from the dead.

12. What is the significance of Jesus' resurrection? What if there was no resurrection? 1 Corinthians 15:14–19

v. 14 _____

v. 15 _____

v. 16 _____

v. 17 _____

v. 18 _____

v. 19 _____

What makes God's gift of grace so costly is that Jesus paid for it with his life. What makes it so powerful is that he came back from the dead—proving that he is the Son of God and showing that God accepted his sacrifice as payment for our sin.

He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification.
—Romans 4:25 (TNIV)

God's law demands that sin be punished by death. Year in and year out, innocent animals would die in the place of God's people, reminding them that sin is costly. However, God's plan was to send his ultimate sacrifice, Jesus Christ, as a "lamb" to be offered for the sins of the whole world. Even more amazing is the fact that the Bible calls Jesus "Immanuel," which means "God with us." God became a man in Jesus Christ and died for the sins of his own creation.

Application & Reflection

What did you learn from this lesson? How will you apply it to your life?

LESSON 4

RECEIVING GOD'S GIFT: A NEW HEART

As a result of receiving God's sacrifice, Jesus Christ, as the payment for our sins, we not only experience forgiveness from the past, but we are given a new heart and a new life as God's children.

1. What did God promise he would give his people? Ezekiel 36:26

2. What does God do when he rescues us from our state of spiritual death? Ephesians 2:4-6

3. What happens when we receive Jesus as Lord and Savior? John 1:12-13

4. What did Jesus say must happen before we can enter the kingdom of God? John 3:3-7

5. What do the following passages tell you about being "born again" or "born of God"?

John 1:12-13 _____

1 Peter 1:23 _____

1 John 3:9 _____

1 John 4:7 _____

6. What does Paul say about those who are “in Christ”? 2 Corinthians 5:17

7. What is the destiny of those who are “born of God”? 1 John 5:4

Application & Reflection

What would you do if someone could offer you a brand-new start in life?
Have you received God’s gift of new life?

LESSON 5

GRACE THROUGH FAITH

It is critical to understand that we cannot save ourselves. The foundation of our faith is Jesus’ death and resurrection. That’s what paid the penalty for our sins. As a result of God’s work in Jesus, we are a new people with a new heart and a new Lord.

1. Is it possible to be saved *by* the good things we do — our “works”? How are we saved? Ephesians 2:8–9

2. Does God save us *because* of the good things we do? If not, why does he save us? Titus 3:4–5

3. What does God’s grace teach the believer? Titus 2:11–12

4. Shall we continue to sin because of God's forgiveness and grace? Romans 6:15

5. What are we created for as new Christians? Ephesians 2:10

6. What did Jesus say to those who believed in him? Matthew 16:24

As we have learned in this chapter, we are spiritually dead and cannot save ourselves. Regardless of who we are, we need a Savior. Jesus Christ is the only true Savior. By receiving Jesus as Savior and Lord, we can be delivered from the power of sin and its consequences. Our salvation is based on what Jesus did for us, not on our own efforts.

We must therefore ...

Realize that we are sinners without excuse (Romans 1:20) and that it is only through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that we can be saved.

Respond by turning from sin and putting our faith in him and then following him as Lord.

In the next two chapters, we will thoroughly examine what it means to now be followers of Jesus.

Application & Reflection

What did you learn from this lesson? How will you apply it to your life?
