

OPEN BIBLE CHURCH

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SERMON TITLE Back to the Basics

SERIES

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KEY SCRIPTURE Acts 2:42

SYNOPSIS The effective Christian life is dependent on the basics of the faith.

HIGHLIGHTS



Back to the Basics

Vince Lombardi is considered by many to be the greatest coach in football history, and he is recognized as one of the greatest coaches and leaders in the history of all American sports. He is known for starting each season of training with this comment: “gentlemen, this is a football.” While many wanted to focus on the fancy plays, Lombardi stressed the basics.

Most people don't need more time, more money, or better strategies. They just need to do the real work and master the basics. In physical fitness, it's not about the latest, fanciest equipment, rather, it's about doing the fundamental exercises. In business, it's not about the coolest website or logo, it's about having a good product that will sell.

So, let's apply this to the Christian walk and to church. Some think to be an effective church, you have to have the latest technology, the best band, and the most dynamic speaker. To successfully do the Christian walk, some think you have to have the coolest journal, the newest Christian book, and the most popular online devotional. But, is any of that really true? Those things aren't bad, but are they necessary? What is the Christian equivalent of a “football?” What are the basics?

☞ Acts 2:42

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

☞ The Word (to the apostles' teaching)

This is a bible. It doesn't have to be fancy with a stylish leather cover or the most study notes and commentary. It contains the word of God and needs to be heard, read and studied. Since it is God's Word, it is inherently powerful. It's not just another book with some good ideas.

☞ Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is **living and active**. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Romans 10:17

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

The bible has a supernatural affect. It builds our faith; it judges our thoughts and attitudes; it penetrates into our soul and spirit. It's not just a good book. It is God's word.

When a Soviet official was asked why a study of the Bible was frowned upon in his country, and why those who dared to print and distribute it were severely punished, he replied, "We find that the reading of the Book changes people in a way that is dangerous to our state!"



During World War II when the Nazis occupied a new territory, they immediately placed all Christians in concentration camps if they made public commitments to the Word of God. They had found that those who clung to the Bible would not compromise their faith or yield to the evil edicts of a godless dictator.

Matthew 4:4 (*soul-food*)

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

☞ **God's word is fuel to our souls. Consider it; Consume it; Conform to it**

James 1:22

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

☞ **"The Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action."** In 2 Timothy 3:16-17 the Bible itself claims to be inspired by the Holy Spirit. This statement is either true or false. If it is false, then the Bible is ultimately irrelevant. However, if it is true, then the Bible is backed up by the authority of God himself.

The most important fundamental in the Christian walk is the Word of God. We need to know it, stow it, show it, and sow it.

☞ **Fellowship** (*to the fellowship; breaking bread*)

Proverbs 27:17

As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

There is a popular idea today that says, "I can be a Christian and love God all by myself. I don't need anyone else. I don't need to go to church." But is that really true?

☞ **Hebrews 10:24-25**

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 **Let us not give up meeting together**, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us **encourage one another**-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

To genuinely walk the Christian walk, we need each other. We need the encouragement of others, especially in these last days.

Table Talk: Encourage each other. Give a compliment; share an inspiring thought or scripture.

☞ **Start timer.**

If we don't get together and encourage each other, there can be negative consequences...

Hebrews 3:13



But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

I've been doing this for a lot of years now and I have seen it happen. When someone gives up on church and Christian fellowship, they tend to weaken in their faith. Eventually, their belief systems become more and more worldly and before long, they're not following Christ any longer.

--Billy Graham... Church-goers are like coals in a fire. When they cling together, they keep the flame aglow; when they separate, they die out.

We need each other. And, it's more than just encouraging each other. There is also a supernatural component to Christian fellowship.

☞ **Matthew 18:20**

For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.

When we gather together with the intent of focusing on the Lord, then he joins us. The Lord himself attends church with us.

☞ **Fellowship is encouraging.** Fellowship and encouragement in the faith are even more important in these last days and the rise of persecution and anti-Christian sentiment.

☞ **Prayer** (to prayer)

Colossians 4:2

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful

1 Peter 3:12

For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer,

Not just requests, but relationship with Jesus

☞ **Jude 20-21**

20 But you, dear friends, **build yourselves up in your most holy faith** and pray in the Holy Spirit. 21 Keep yourselves in God's love

R. A. Torrey lamented the average believer's indifference to prayer by writing: How little time the average Christian spends in prayer! We are too busy to pray, and so we are too busy to have power. We have a great deal of activity, but we accomplish little... the power of God is lacking in our lives and in our work. We have not because we ask not.

☞ **1 Thessalonians 5:17** **pray continually**



You can have an ongoing conversation with the Lord, no matter what you are doing. And, when someone comes to mind, talk to God on their behalf. That's prayer.

Ephesians 6:18

pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.

Always remember, when we are gathered together here you can pray with each other, especially, if there's a time during the music where we are just waiting on the Lord. Follow the Spirit's leading and pray with each other.

☞ **James 5:16**

The prayer of a righteous man is **powerful and effective.**

Examples of powerful prayer:

Exodus 8:30-31 Then Moses... prayed to the LORD...The plague of flies left...

2 Kings 4:32-35 Elisha... prayed to the LORD... the dead boy revived.

2 Kings 6:17 And Elisha prayed... the LORD opened the servant's eyes to the spirit realm

Daniel 9:20-21 while I was still in prayer, Gabriel...came to me in swift flight

Acts 4:31

After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

Lisa prayed about finding something for her boss and then immediately found it.

We prayed for Hope's shoulder and then she could raise her arm up.

On a mission trip, our team prayed and a person got their ability to hear restored.

☞ **Prayer changes things!**

☞ **Let's always remember the basics:**

- ◆ **God's Word is fuel to our soul**
- ◆ **Fellowship with other believers is encouraging**
- ◆ **Prayer changes things**

Before you go, ask the others at your table how you can be praying for them.