

## **Instructional Guidelines & Reference Materials**

The following study guide, **Basic Training – The Nature of God**, has been prepared especially for you by James W. Goll. They are tailor made for your individual, small group, or training center needs in mind. At the end of each lesson, there are Reflection Questions to help you in your review of the materials you have studied. In a back section of this study guide, you will find the answers to the Reflection Questions to aid you in your learning

Encounters Network also has for purchase the audio cassettes and/or CDs that match up with each lesson. Use this study guide alone, or for more thorough understanding, order the corresponding cassette/CD messages from our Resource Center. Video/DVD recordings are also available on some of these selected topics.

The twelve lessons in this study guide correspond to the following audio messages.

- A Firm Foundation
- The Authority of God's Word
- Studying the Word of God
- The Effects of God's Word Part I
- The Effects of God's Word Part II
- God as Father
- The Attributes of God
- Jesus the Messiah Part I
- Jesus the Messiah Part II
- The Person of the Holy Spirit
- Prophetic Ministry Part I
- Prophetic Ministry Part II

You may place orders for materials from Encounter Network's Resource Center by calling 1-877-200-1604 from 9:00am-4:00pm Monday through Friday or fax 615-599-5554 with your order. You may also mail your orders to P.O. Box 470470, Tulsa, OK, 74147-0470. An order sheet is enclosed at the back of this manual for your assistance. Also look at our website on the internet at [www.encountersnetwork.com](http://www.encountersnetwork.com).

If you have benefited from this study guide, note that we offer other complete study guides by James W. Goll for your use.

## **Dedication and Acknowledgement**

I have had many rich blessings in my walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. Some of these blessings have taken the form of tutors or equippers the Holy Spirit brought into my life. The most influential of all these human agencies has thus far been the late Derek Prince. His amazing teaching ministry always founded on the Word of God radically impacted my life.

With this in mind, I dedicate this Study Guide on **The Nature of God** in honor of my grandfather in the faith – Derek Prince.

Thank you Lord for allowing the teaching influence of this humble, integrous man to cross my path, As another generation arises and now studies these particular notes as I did Derek Prince's many books and outlines, may concrete be poured into their lives as it was into mine. To God be the glory!

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# Basic Training: Part One

## Preface: The Nature of God

By James W. Goll

This Study Guide, **The Nature of God**, is the first in a series on Basic Training and comes from my own heart's desire to know my Lord better. Though it is my fifteenth manual, perhaps it should have been my first. These teachings help us with the A, B, C's. Our goal in life is to know God and to make Him known. I encourage you as you approach this subject of knowing the nature of God, look deeply – not just surface level. Hunger for the things of God, the truth of God, and for God Himself.

Once again, the Study Guide is divided in sections. The first section is simply called **Knowing the Word of God**. In it we see the need to lay a firm foundation. We then take time to learn about the origin, effectiveness, and power of God's Word.

The second section is called **Knowing God**. We'll first look at **God as Father**. What a privilege to be a son or daughter of God. But if that is the case, then He must be a Father. This section alone could transform your life! Come on a journey and bask in the light of God as Father! Next we'll look at **Jesus – Our Messiah**. He is our Master, Savior, Deliverer, and our Messiah! In these lessons, you will get a peak at who Christ Jesus really is and as a result you will love Him all the more. Lastly we'll learn about our personal tutor – **The Person of the Holy Spirit**. It takes God to know God, and you can't have enough of the Holy Spirit! We complete our Study Guide on **The Nature of God** by getting to know the third person of the trinity at a deeper level.

In our quest to know our Master, there are many courses to enroll in. Surely being devoted to the study of scripture, a life of worship and prayer, walking in forgiveness, and soaking in His great love are some of the classes we each need to learn from along the way. Let us learn the Nature of God and thus be transformed into His image.

As usual, you will find **Reflection Questions** at the end of each lesson and the corresponding answers in the back of the manual. This Study Guide is prepared to help you to know the Lord of Hosts and walk in His nature. Let it be for the glory of God!

***Blessings to You!***

**James W. Goll**

# Section One:

# Knowing the Word of God

## Lesson One

### **A Firm Foundation**

In the beginning of this series on Basic Training – The Nature of God, it is important that we lay a firm foundation. The depth and the strength of the foundation determine what can be built upon it. There is a fixed relationship between the strength of the foundation and the size and permanence of its structure.

Psalm 11:3 states, “If the foundations are destroyed what can the righteous do?” This is a question that must be asked and answered sufficiently. Whether you are “investigating the Christian faith,” a “new believer in Christ” or have been a “true disciple” for scores of years, it behooves us each to make sure our foundation is solid!

Therefore, I welcome you into this study, where we learn to become an authentic follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us make sure our foundation is firm.

#### **I. SCRIPTURES ON BUILDING A PROPER FOUNDATION**

##### **A. I Corinthians 3:9, 10 – You are God’s Building.**

For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it.

##### **B. Ephesians 2:22 – Built Together for a Habitation of God.**

In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

##### **C. Colossians 2:6, 7 – Firmly Rooted and Built Up in Him.**

Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude.

##### **D. Acts 20:32 – Grace Builds Us Up!**

And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

**E. Hebrews 5:12-14; 6:1-3 – Let Us Lay Properly the Elementary Principles of Christ.**

5:12-14 – For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

6:1-3 – Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. And this we will do, if God permits.

**F. Jude 20 – Build Yourself Up!**

But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit...

**II. THE FOUNDATION IS THE ROCK – CHRIST JESUS**

**A. Old Testament Passages Foretell This Truth.**

1. Isaiah 28:16 – A stone for the foundation.
2. Psalm 18:2 – The Lord is my Rock.
3. Psalms 62:1-7 – He alone is the Rock of my salvation.

**B. New Testament Passages Reveal This Truth**

1. I Corinthians 3:11 – Christ Jesus is the foundation.
2. Acts 4:11, 12 – The Stone which the builders rejected...
3. Ephesians 2:19-21 – Christ the Cornerstone.
4. I Peter 2:6 – Chief Cornerstone, precious, elect.

### III. CHRIST JESUS IS THE ROCK OF OUR SALVATION

#### A. Jesus' Own Words Confirm This Truth

1. Matthew 16:13-18

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."

2. The Greek word for Peter is "Petros" which means small stone or a pebble.
3. The Greek word for rock is "petra" which means large rock.

Jesus is using a "play on words" in His teaching here. He is not identifying Peter as the rock; on the contrary, He is contrasting Peter with Rock! Our lives are not built upon the life and words of a mere man (small stone), but on the Rock (Petra) of Ages which is immovable, unshakable and reliable.

#### B. Four Successive Phases

There are four successive phases by which each believer takes his place upon this foundation. These are exemplified by the experience of Peter.

1. A direct, personal confrontation of Peter by Christ. Jesus and Peter stood face to face. There was no middle man. No other human being played any part at all in the experience.
2. A direct, personal revelation given to Peter. Matthew 16:17 states, "Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven." It was not the outcome of natural reasoning or intellectual attainment. It was the direct spiritual revelation to Peter by God the Father Himself!
3. It demanded a personal acknowledgement by Peter of the truth that had been granted to him.
4. This was done by an open and public confession by Peter of the truth he acknowledged. (We can each have this same fourfold encounter with Jesus Christ!)

### **C. Three Possible Stages of People**

Where the true Apostolic Gospel of the Kingdom of God is not preached, it results in half-baked believers who might be the “House of Man” not yet truly in the “House of God.” Consider these three possible characteristics of mankind in our journey of becoming.

1. Careless Sinners – those without any manifest concern for salvation.
2. Awakened Sinners – those under the spirit of conviction but not yet possessing a true saving knowledge with experience of Christ Jesus.
3. Born Again Believers – those who are supernaturally born of the Spirit by possessing the very life of God within them accompanied by the witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:9, 16).

### **D. What is Your Experience?**

1. John 16:13, 14 – Revelation given by the Holy Spirit.
2. Hebrews 13:8 – He remains the same.
3. John 17:3 – Imparts Eternal Life
4. I John 5:13, 20 – Believe in the name.
5. II Timothy 1:12 – I know whom...
6. Job 22:21 – Acquaint yourself with Him.

## **IV. BUILDING UPON THE FOUNDATION**

### **A. Hearing and Doing the Words of Christ**

1. Matthew 7:24-27  
“Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell--and great was its fall.”

- a. Notice the difference between the one called “wise” and those called “foolish.”
- b. Notice the similarities.
- c. Therefore, build your house solid so as to endure the tests of life (compare to Acts 14:22).

## **B. The Bible – the Written Word – and Christ – The Living Word**

1. John 1:1 – The Word was God.
2. John 1:14 – The Word became Flesh.
3. Revelation 19:13 – His Name is called the Word of God.

## **C. Want a Relationship with Jesus? Have a Relationship with His Word!**

1. John 14:19-23  
“After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?” Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.”
2. Proof of Discipleship
  - a. Keeping God’s Word is the supreme feature which distinguishes the disciple of Christ.
  - b. Keeping God’s Word is the supreme test of the love for God and the supreme case of God’s favor toward the believer.
  - c. Christ manifests Himself to the disciple through God’s Word, as it is kept and obeyed.
  - d. The Father and the Son come into the life of the disciple and establishes their abiding home with him through God’s Word (compare to I John 2:4, 5).

**D. The Spirit and the Word Agree!**

1. Acts 2:17 – God speaks through various supernatural means.
2. I Thessalonians 5:19-21 – All revelation must be tested by the standards of God’s Word (compare to Isaiah 8:20; Matt. 24:23-25; I Tim 4:13).
3. Psalms 33:6 – From creation onward.  
God’s Word and God’s Spirit work in unity and harmony. They must work the same way in the life of each believer (compare to Genesis 1:2).

## **Reflective Questions**

### **Lesson 1: A Firm Foundation**

*Answers can be found in the back of the study guide.*

1. Psalm 11:3 says, “If the \_\_\_\_\_ are destroyed, what can the righteous do?”
2. The Old Testament \_\_\_\_\_ and the New Testament \_\_\_\_\_ the truth that Christ Jesus is our Rock and our Foundation.
3. When Jesus told Peter, “Upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18), what was and is the “rock” Jesus was speaking of?
4. What are four successive phases by which each believer takes his or her place upon this foundation, as exemplified in the life of Peter?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Review Section III, letter C. Think about the stages and significant events in your “journey of becoming.” Which are you right now?
6. Review Section III, letter D. Look up each verse. Which verse best describes your present experience with Christ? Explain why.
7. Review Section IV. Ask God to show you what building upon the foundation of Christ might look like for you in the days ahead.
8. In response to what you hear from the Lord, write out one or two “keepable” action steps that you want to implement consistently for the next month (and continue after that). Be as specific as possible.