



# MORE *and* BETTER

## Why does this matter?

November 25 | Chris Stevens, Lead Pastor

The most interesting routines to watch on a balance beam are the ones where people try something new or seemingly impossible. It's an opportunity to encourage people in the face of failure, and it's a joy to celebrate success. In our own lives of discipleship, we can balk at taking risks – question whether it is worth the potential of failure.

We will all stand before God as Judge one day. We will give an account of our lives to the One who has extended grace and eternal life to us. And when we do that, do you want to tell a story of fear and inaction? Or would you hope to share a story of lives transformed, risks taken, disappointments faced and celebrations had? Taking the leap of making more and better disciples is to take that risk and live our lives in a way that pleases the Lord.



## MESSAGE NOTES

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### 2 Corinthians 5:6-21

v. 5: One day we will all stand before the Judge.

v. 6-8: Paul longs for heaven. In your day to day life, do you have a longing for the Lord or a longing for heaven?

v. 10: We see this reminder throughout scripture (e.g. Ephesians 2:8-9).

#### **RELIGION responds to DUTY**

Out of fear of judgement and condemnation, you do things to appease God and ensure He will be happy with you on the day of judgement.

#### **CHRISTIANITY responds to GRACE**

Because of the time you've spent with the Lord, enjoying His presence, you live life with a desire to serve Him and others.

v. 15: Does Christ's love compel you to live for Him?

v. 16-17: As new creations, we are to live in a new way, to recognize old patterns and change them.

#### **Evidence of the Spirit**

##### **OLD HAS GONE**

- No longer living for work, family or pleasure, but for Christ
- No longer giving ourselves to sinful ways or ignoring Christ's call to love

##### **NEW HAS COME**

- Live a resurrected life, submitted to Jesus for His benefit and others'
- Follow the Holy Spirit in obedience to God's Word

Are you living your life for your own benefit or for the benefit of the One who made you and saved you?

v. 18-19: In the midst of our failures and shortcomings Jesus reconciles us to God. He invites us into a life that then invites others in.

v. 20: An ambassador is an official representative of a country or king. You, too, are a new creation in Christ, an ambassador of King Jesus.

*When you stand before God will you smile from ear to ear, pleased with the routine of your life?*

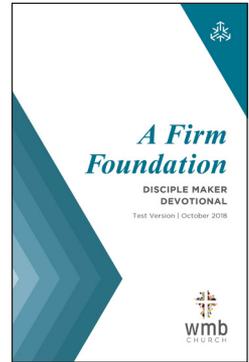
# HOME GROUP MATERIALS

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Our hope for this series is for everyone in Home Groups to walk through our new devotional, *A Firm Foundation*.

Why all of us? We do discipleship best as **we learn from each other**. To start the journey, it can be easier if we are familiar with the tools. By using *A Firm Foundation* in Home Group, we will gain that familiarity.

Note that this is a **test copy**. Not only do we assume there are some typos, we want to know how the book works. When you sign up to receive one, you will receive a feedback form in coming weeks.



Request a copy at  
[wmbchurch.ca/  
afirmfoundation](http://wmbchurch.ca/afirmfoundation)

## Living a life that pleases the Lord

As we reflect on this week's material and the material in *A Firm Foundation*, we want to both celebrate the way we have been living a life that pleases the Lord and call one another to further action.

In this discussion, grace is key. We can start to slip into earning our goodness or comparison, two dangerous, non-gospel centered postures. Ever mindful of grace, we are asking not "What have you done to earn God's love?" but instead, "how have you been responding to God's love?"

As we consider this in light of our message and our scripture, we note that this life is not lived for the benefit of ourselves, but for the benefit of others. Therefore, we can even expand our question: "How are you responding to God's love for the benefit of others?"

God is a perfect parent. No matter what our own parents were like, He is only good and better. So imagine a perfect parent celebrating the success of their (frankly, imperfect) children. How deep and long and wide and high is that perfect love?

As a group, encourage steps of faith. Celebrate risks taken. Cover places of disobedience or fear with prayer and love.

When we experience the gospel – the full, life-giving, world-changing, freedom-bringing gospel – we get to experience the joy of serving God. We have the freedom to do what pleases Him – to love God and to love our neighbours. What could be better than that?



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