One of the greatest spiritual blessings in Christ is to be able to contribute a portion of the blessings given to us by God to the spread of the Gospel, to help those in need, and to generally support the church in its ongoing work. Faithful Christians have this opportunity each and every Lord’s Day as commanded by inspiration (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Just as we remember the death and suffering of Jesus on the cross for our sins, so also we remember the need to “lay by in store as we have been prospered.” This part of our worship is to be done like the other acts of worship, cheerfully and devotedly. Please remember that worship is the “kissing of the hand toward God.” But what does this act of worship promise to me in return? Examining the Scriptures reveals that we will receive much in every way. This does not mean that we will bargain with God, or that we think of it as a debt on God’s part. Please study carefully and be thankful for the letter Paul wrote to the Corinthians. The inspired assurance is happily received by every Christian:

“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God” (2 Cor. 9:6).

Keep these thoughts in mind as you worship on the Lord’s Day.
Preachers are called upon to speak at many memorial services for the dead. Some of these are an honor and easier to preach than others, due to the life of the passing individual. The only funeral sermon found in the Bible is recorded in Luke 16:19-31. This sermon was spoken by Jesus, concerning a rich man and a man named Lazarus. It is spoken in this manner: “And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom” (Lk. 16:22-23). It is indicated by Abraham that the former beggar on earth had listened to Moses and the prophets, repented of sins and obeyed God’s Word, while the former rich man rejected God’s Word for his own selfish purposes on earth. Today, we are not subject to the Law of Moses as a law (Col. 2:14), but we are in the Christian dispensation and, therefore, are subject to the law of Christ in the Gospel (Gal. 6:2; Rom. 8:1-2). The saved are those who die “in the Lord” (Rev. 14:13), because they live in the Lord. The unrighteous dead do not die into the Lord! Those who live for the Lord here will be with Lazarus in the Paradise of Hades, awaiting the Judgment, but those who reject the offers of the Gospel by not being baptized upon their belief, repentance, and confession will be in the torment compartment of Hades (II Pet. 2:4). Think for a moment what might be said by a faithful Gospel preacher at our funeral.

1. The deceased (was, was not) a Christian and, therefore, we (have, have not) a reasonable hope for him/her.
2. This one’s family (knew, knew not) this one to be a person of prayer and devotion to God.
3. He was a person who regularly (attended, ignored) the worship services and (could, could not) be counted on to serve to the best of his/her ability.
4. This one was always (concerned, unconcerned) with the lost, the poor, the afflicted, the homeless, and always (encouraged, discouraged) missionary efforts.
5. He (loved, did not love) his fellow man, evidenced by the way he treated him.
6. He was (a true friend, two-faced) to those who trusted him and always made a real contribution to the (happiness, unhappiness) of people wherever he/she went.
7. His/Her family (rejoiced/dreaded) to see him/her come home.
8. He/She (possessed, did not possess) honesty, integrity, humility, sincerity, dependability, and love.
9. He/She knew the Truth and (tried, did not try) to obey it.
10. He/She (did, did not) fight a good fight, finish the course, keep the faith; therefore, (there is, is not) laid up for him/her a crown of righteousness.
Anybody who knows anything about construction knows the necessity of a good foundation. The integrity of any structure is proportional to the strength of its foundation. Jesus taught about the importance of a good foundation in Matthew 7. He later commended Peter’s confession of His identity and vowed to build His church on that rock-solid foundation (Matthew 16:18).

Today, we know that the foundation of our faith is built on the words of Christ. Here at the Gospel Advocate, the adult study material produced quarterly is called Foundations. Foundations is a 13-week lesson book built on a scriptural topic or text that can be used either for personal study or as classroom material. The topic changes quarterly. Many congregations depend on it weekly in providing a consistent method of study.

To provide the users of Foundations with more material for the spring quarter in the study of Daniel, we made some subtle changes, such as a smaller font size, more space, and removing the dates from lessons to make them more flexible. Well, sometimes what is subtle to some becomes monumental to others. Many of our readers told us the font size was too small (a legitimate concern for some of our readers who are visually impaired), but the biggest response was "What happened to the dates?"

These users of Foundations will be glad to know we changed it back to the way they like it (larger font size, dates back in) for the summer quarter. Along with those changes, we made some improvements like a spiral binding so the book will lay flat, more space for answering questions, and a reinforced cover to withstand the punishment of use after a quarter of study. It is my desire that Foundations users will find this new version to be the best version of Foundations to date. I am interested to receive comments from users on what they think.

The moral of the story . . . don't mess with a good foundation. Our changes to Foundations were made in the spirit of helping congregations. Little did we know those changes would not be well-received. Likewise, we as Christians should not mess with the foundation of our faith. Jesus is the chief cornerstone (Psalm 118:22; Isaiah 28:16; Acts 4:11). He has been given all authority (Matthew 28:18). He is the only way to the Father (John 14:6). He has the words of eternal life (6:68).

These biblical truths are the rock-solid building blocks of our faith. Regardless of the state of the world and the influence it brings to the church, we must not mess with the foundation laid in Scripture. We must not alter, minimize, compromise, elaborate on, or think we can enhance the truth. Once we receive it, we must then share it with others in the same spirit that Christ shared it with us and be the church He wants us to be (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Timothy 3:15).