

Being a Balanced Believer

In a world filled with confusion and compromise, how do we build a strong spiritual foundation? It's time for the church to arise, shake things up, and experience the extraordinary. God is able to do "exceedingly, abundantly above all that we've ever seen before," but first, we must be faithful with what we already have.

The Key to Seeing More of God

You don't get any more than you're thankful for. This principle is fundamental to spiritual growth. When we live in a continual state of thanksgiving and praise, we position ourselves to see more of God's work in our lives.

Being ungrateful blinds us to what we already have. If you're not giving thanks for something, you're obviously not appreciating it. If you're not appreciating it, it's because you don't value it. And you probably don't value it because you don't recognize its true worth.

Our Salvation: Something to Celebrate Daily

Our salvation alone should keep us in a constant state of gratitude. Have you looked at the world lately? Most people have no idea what it means to be born again. They may have religious concepts about Jesus or ideas about the Bible, but they don't know the Bible as their spiritual food.

Jesus said, "You'll know the truth and the truth will set you free." We've tasted and seen that the Lord is good, experiencing freedom upon freedom in following Him and getting to know the truth.

Next time you walk past a mirror, stop and say, "Look what the Lord has done in my life!" Our salvation is something we should celebrate all the time.

Why Christians Should Never Be Depressed

There should be no sad saints or depressed believers. Why? Because no matter what negative circumstances we face, they pale in comparison to what God has already done in our lives.

What God has already done, the devil could never undo or outmatch. The devil can't outmatch God's goodness with something evil because anything he throws at you, you've been redeemed from. You've been raised up over it. God has already promised that no weapon formed against you will prosper.

Adding to Your Faith: The Path to Spiritual Growth

In 2 Peter 1:5, we're instructed: "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge..."

We have this great faith that's been given to us, and now we need to build upon it. Here's what we should add:

1. Virtue (Moral Excellence)

Be virtuous and morally excellent. In today's church world, there's often a mixture of the holy and the profane, humility and pride. Some have gone to the extreme of focusing only on holiness rules, while others emphasize grace to the point where holiness is forgotten.

We need balance. The fear of God will keep you from sin. Sinning should be scary because it separates us from God.

2. Knowledge

The Bible says, "Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). This is more than just reading—it's studying to properly understand and apply God's word.

3. Self-Control

It's interesting that many Christians say "God's in control" when the Bible actually emphasizes self-control as a fruit of the Spirit. People who add self-control to their faith don't walk around saying "God's in control." Only those who aren't practicing self-control tend to say that!

4. Perseverance

We don't quit. We don't give up. We're going to stay in this thing because if we go the distance, we win. God transforms our lives through the fight and the struggles—that's when He does His greatest work in us.

Don't Judge the Vessel, Judge the Message

In Philippians 1:15-18, Paul notes that some preach Christ from envy and strife, while others preach from goodwill. Some have selfish ambition and aren't sincere. Yet Paul concludes: "What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice."

When Christ is preached, there's an anointing regardless of the vessel. The anointing on someone's life isn't necessarily God's approval of how they're living. That's why we should never judge where we stand with God based on how much He uses us or how much anointing we experience.

Always come back to the Bible: How well am I lining up with Scripture? How morally excellent am I? How much am I growing in knowledge? How deep is my communion with God?

The Path of Life vs. The Paths of the Destroyer

Jesus is the path of life—the way, the truth, and the life. There's just one path to life. But when it comes to the destroyer, he has many paths that all lead to destruction.

The Psalmist said, "By the words of your lips, I have kept myself from the paths of the destroyer." The Word helps keep you on the right path so the devil can't destroy you.

The devil sets snares to trap and destroy. He's not in the catch-and-release business—he's in the catch-and-destroy business. Sometimes it's slow destruction, sometimes it's quick, but it's always destruction.

The Power of Jesus' Name

If you don't know much Scripture, at least know Jesus. The name of the Lord is a strong tower, and you can run into it and be safe. When all else fails, just shout "Jesus!"

The speaker shared a powerful testimony of being in a car spinning out of control on an icy highway, facing an oncoming semi-truck. In that moment, all he could say was "Jesus"—and miraculously, the car turned back around, moved to the middle lane, and slowed down until he regained control.

Life Application

This week, focus on adding to your faith in these specific ways:

Practice gratitude daily: Take time each day to thank God specifically for your salvation and the ways He's working in your life. Remember, you don't get any more than you're thankful for.

Add virtue to your faith: Examine one area where you can improve in moral excellence. Ask God to help you grow in holiness without falling into legalism.

Increase in knowledge: Commit to studying (not just reading) a portion of Scripture this week. Try to understand it deeply enough that you could explain it to someone else.

Exercise self-control: Identify one area where you've been saying "God's in control" instead of practicing self-control. Take responsibility for your choices in this area.

Persevere through challenges: When you face difficulties this week, remind yourself that God is transforming you through the struggle. Don't quit—keep getting back up.

Ask yourself:

- Am I truly thankful for my salvation, or have I begun to take it for granted?
- In what areas of my life am I growing in virtue and moral excellence?
- How am I increasing in the knowledge of God beyond just attending church?
- Where do I need to exercise more self-control rather than making excuses?
- When I fall, do I stay down in defeat or get back up with determination?

Remember, if you're fighting, resisting, struggling, falling but getting back up again—the day will come when you won't fall anymore. God has placed you in this time for a purpose. Add to your faith, and watch how He works through you in these extraordinary days!

Quotes

1. You never receive more than what you're thankful for.
2. You don't get beyond your level of thanksgiving. That's why we should live in a continual state of gratitude and praise, thanking God for all He's done.
3. Ungratefulness blinds you.
4. Our salvation should be a constant celebration.
5. There should be no sad saints—no depressed saints.
6. Anything the devil throws at you, you've been redeemed from it.
7. We need a healthy, reverent fear of the Lord.
8. Repentance itself is a gift—the desire to repent, the ability to repent, the act of repentance—it's all a gift. Grab hold of it and be deeply thankful for it.
9. Much of the church world today avoids even using the word “sin.” It's unpopular. It makes people uncomfortable. But this compromise is a great deception.
10. We must walk in what we know—living fully in God, doing things His way.
11. We're not leaving this earth until we see God glorified in our generation. God needs a church that thinks, talks, and believes like that.
12. It's time to see the unusual—the miraculous, the remarkable, the amazing!
13. When you love someone, say it. “I love you.” It never gets old—it needs to be said again and again.
14. Healing and wellness come more easily when you continually acknowledge what God has already done—how He's saved, healed, and delivered you in the past.
15. Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

16. When Christ is preached, the anointing is present.
17. The anointing on someone's life is not necessarily an endorsement of how they're living. Those are two separate things.
18. God does not make people perverse. No one can say, "God made me this way."
19. No matter how many times you fall, get back up. Have the heart of Rocky Balboa—get back in the ring. Falling is not the end.
20. Never confuse God's goodness with your own. Just because God is good to you doesn't mean you're good. Just because He speaks to you doesn't mean it's an approval of your life.

Verses

1. 2 Peter 1:5
2. Proverbs 31
3. Isaiah 54:17
4. Philippians 1:15
5. Psalm 17:4

Summary

Building a strong spiritual foundation requires adding to our faith. We must start with gratitude for our salvation, recognizing its immense value in a confused world. To grow spiritually, we need to add virtue (moral excellence), knowledge through studying Scripture, self-control as a fruit of the Spirit, and perseverance through challenges. The name of Jesus serves as our strong tower in times of trouble. By focusing on these elements and staying on the path of life rather than the destroyer's many paths, we position ourselves for God to work extraordinarily through us.