

FOUNDATIONS #1

“The Construction of the Christian Life”

I. Introduction

Jesus took simple subjects like a farmer sowing a seed, a bride preparing for her wedding, or a prodigal son returning to his father to reveal the most amazing mysteries of who God is and how things work.

Tonight we begin a new teaching series on the “Foundations” of the Christian faith; and the word “foundations” is another example of how the Bible uses simple things that we know about to teach us deep spiritual truth that we do not know.

And so it is with how the New Testament teaches how the Christian life is like the construction of a building.

Jesus said...

**Upon this rock I will build My Church
Matthew 16:18**

The Apostle Paul picked up on this metaphor and saw himself as a co-worker with Christ in building His church, writing this to the Christians at Corinth...

**For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building
1 Corinthians 3:9**

In the next verse, Paul sees his own apostolic ministry as that of a builder...

**According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise
masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation...
1 Corinthians 3:10 KJV**

Paul saw the churches as spiritual “construction sites”, writing to the Ephesians...

**...you also are being built up together for a habitation of God in the Spirit...
Ephesians 2:22**

Peter wrote to the believers...

**“...you are the living stones that God is building into His spiritual temple.”
1 Peter 2:5**

The New Testament is consistently concerned with the Christian life as a construction in progress.

**And I brethren, commend you to God and to the word of His grace which is able to build you up...
Acts 20:32**

Jesus is building His church-but we also have a part to play...

**But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.
Jude 20 NIV**

So if the Christian life is a construction site, and we are God’s “building”, it is no wonder we ought to pay attention to *foundations*!
What is a “foundation”?.

“foundation”

**The lowest load-bearing part of a building, typically below ground level.
The basis or groundwork of anything.
The Oxford Dictionary**

**The basis upon which something stands
Merriam-Webster**

The foundation is the most important part of a building. The foundation sets limits to the building that can be built upon it as to size and weight.

- We bought our first house in Little Rock, AR in 1971; it was a single level brick house built on a concrete slab; a very shallow hole had to be dug for the foundation
- But downtown, they were building a new 24 story bank building downtown; and it took several months just to prepare the foundation before any construction at all could be seen above ground.
- The same principle applies to the construction of the Christian life.

“We can never build a Christian life greater than what our foundation can support.”

Derek Prince

In my personal experience after many years of ministry, I have seen so many of God’s people backslide or fall away from the faith; and many others who seem to “hit a ceiling” in their spiritual growth. I have come to believe that the problem, in many cases, was that *time was never taken to establish a solid foundation.*

So many Christians run here and there, church to church, conference to conference, seminar to seminar. They gather a truth here, a prophetic word there, a revelation over here or there, then run home to attach it a Christian life where the foundations of the faith were never properly laid.

But that is like putting a roof on a house that has no walls; or trying to build walls before you’ve laid a foundation.

Digging and laying foundations is hard work and foundations are the least attractive part of a building. They are below ground, out of sight. But the Lord Jesus Christ considered the subject of foundations to be nothing less than...

II. A Matter of Life and Death

A. The Parable of the 2 Houses

1. Jesus taught on foundations in 2 powerful passages in the Gospels; the 1st in the climax of the famous Sermon on the Mount:

Matthew 7:21-23 NKJV

21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

- a. Not everyone who calls Jesus Lord will be saved.
- b. Many who call Jesus Lord, (even miracle workers), will not be saved.

c. If He had stopped there, who among us could hope to know who's who? But He goes on with...

Matthew 7:24-25 (NKJV)

"Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

d. "Therefore" means that He is still on the same subject; the danger of thinking you're saved when you are not.

e. The "wise man", who hears the Word of God and does the Word of God has his "house" founded on the rock.

Matthew 7:26-27

"But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

f. The wise man built on the rock; the foolish man built on the sand; the storms hit both houses; one stood the other fell; the difference was? Right. The foundation!

g. The foundation of your religion is a matter of life and death!

2. This is brought out even more clearly in Luke's version of the parable; we will take the time to look at it as well. He begins with a question:

Luke 6:46

"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?"

a. Once again He is dealing with those who call Him Lord but live lives that make that a lie.

Luke 6:47-48

Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.

b. Luke does not call him a “wise man” but he does add the detail “dug deep: he also specifically uses the word “foundation”. Again this is the one who “comes” to the Lord, “hears”, His Word, and “does” His word!

Luke 6:49

But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

Luke 6:47-49 NKJV

c. Luke does not call him a “foolish man”; also, he doesn’t say the house is built on sand, he says it is built “on the earth without a foundation. So whether you call it “sand” or “earth”, if your Christian life is not on the foundation of the rock, your house won’t stand.

B. Lessons to be Learned from the Parables

1. There is an obvious comparison and contrast between these 2 men

Comparison

- Both men are building a house
- Both houses are hit by a storm
- Both men heard the Word

Contrast

- One man heard the Word and did it
- One man heard the Word but did not do it
- One house stood; the other house fell

**THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE 2 HOUSES
WAS THE FOUNDATION!**

2. So what have we said so far?

REVIEW 2 THINGS

- First: The Christian life is like a construction project (Jesus said He would “build” His church; Paul said we are “God’s building”).
- Second: The foundation determines whether or not our lives can withstand the storm; and it’s the quality of our foundation that determines the size and weight of the life we can build on it. So now we come to the question:

What is the Foundation of the Christian faith?

3. Over the next few weeks, we will be considering that question; but let me go ahead and give you a preview.

III. Overview of the Series: 2 Parts

A. The Foundations of the Christian Faith are Personal and Doctrinal

1. The foundation is Personal. We will begin not with a “what” but with a “Who”!

The foundation of the Christian faith is laid in our lives by the supernatural revelation of the true identity of Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God.

a. We learn this in Matthew 16, where Simon Peter had the right answer to Jesus question, “Who do you say that I am?”

Matthew 16:17-18

17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

b. What is the rock? The Church of Rome teaches that the rock is Peter himself; but as we will see next week, this is surely a serious error!

c. The rock is Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and He builds His church on the rock of our revelation of who He really is!

2. In the 2nd part of the series, we will look at the 6 foundational doctrines of the Christian faith, found in Hebrews

Hebrews 6:1-3 NKJV

6 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this we will do if God permits.

a. Here we find 6 foundational doctrines of the faith:

- (1) Repentance from dead works**
- (2) Faith toward God**
- (3) Baptisms**
- (4) Laying of hands**
- (5) Resurrection of the dead**
- (6) Eternal judgment**

3. The writer of Hebrews here speaks of the Personal foundation which is Christ; then the 6 foundational Doctrines of the faith; then says “let us leave (or build upon) these and “go on to perfection” (maturity)....

And this we will do if God will permit.
Hebrews 6:3

4. This seems strange! Why would God NOT permit us to go on to full maturity? Why would God not allow us to go on toward a higher level of Christian living?

Here’s the answer: in almost all places you cannot begin to build a building without a building permit. Then, at each stage of the building process, there must be a building inspection of the work done so far. You lay a foundation but the foundation must be inspected before you will get a permit to move on the next stage of construction. You can’t move past the foundation without a permit.

So it is with the construction of a Christian life.

“We can never build a Christian life greater than what our foundation can support.”
Derek Prince

In my experience, many Christians never check their foundation. They try to build something bigger than what their foundation can support. Even after all these years, I never feel it to be a waste of time to review the foundations of the faith. Especially if I want to help others!

And this we will do...IF GOD PERMITS!

CLOSING PRAYER AND PERSONAL MINISTRY

Title: The Construction of the Christian Life