

## **OUR FOUNDATION**

Having a solid, well-built foundation is essential in building anything that is meant to last. If the foundation is not solid, the superstructure that is built upon it, regardless of its sturdy appearance, will soon crumble and eventually come down. At the least, it will fall into such disrepair that it will no longer be fit for habitation or use. Because all men understand this principle, the Lord used it to instruct us concerning the proper building of our lives.

The Bible speaks of our lives as buildings (2 Cor. 5:1) and describes for us the kind of foundation upon which they must be built. The Bible also refers to the Church as a building (Eph. 2:19-22) and describes the foundation upon which it must be built.

### **I. WHAT DID JESUS TEACH ABOUT OUR PERSONAL FOUNDATIONS?**

In teaching us concerning our personal foundations, Jesus gave us the parable of the two houses. This parable is recorded for us in two places: first in Matthew 7:24-27:

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock;

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock.

And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand.

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and burst against that house; and it fell, and great was its fall."

Secondly, in Luke 6:46-49:

"Everyone who comes to Me, and hears my words, and acts upon them, I will show you whom he is like:

He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation upon the rock; and when a flood arose, the river burst against that house and could not shake it because it had been well built.

But the one who has heard, and has not acted accordingly, is like a man who built a house upon the ground without any foundation; and the river burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great."

Before we study this parable in detail, notice that Matt. 7:24 begins with the word "therefore", meaning that what follows is a direct result of that which precedes it. In this case, the preceding verse contains some important statements concerning the kingdom of heaven. Jesus said:

"Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of my Father, who is in heaven.

Many will say to Me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?

And then I will declare upon them, I never knew you, depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness."

In other words, in order to build our personal lives with the proper motives and sound results, we must subject our purposes to His purpose--and ourselves to Him as Lord and King! These verses tell us that:

- (1) The kingdom of heaven is that realm where Jesus Christ is the absolute King and His authority alone prevails. Just as any citizen is obliged to obey the laws of his country or suffer the consequences, we must obey the Law of Christ and follow the principles of His kingdom if we are to live in it and inherit it.
- (2) Being able to prophesy, speak in tongues, cast out demons, and work miracles does not guarantee entrance into the kingdom. Many of them won't realize this until THAT DAY!
- (3) The kingdom consists of those who DO THE WILL OF THE FATHER. What is the will of the Father? It is the entire purpose and plan of God which is revealed to us in the person and redemptive work of His Son, Jesus Christ, as recorded in His Word -- the Bible. Furthermore, it is not enough merely to say, "Lord, Lord," we must actually DO the will of the Father. Jesus said in another place, "If you love Me, keep my commandments."

Now, let us go on to study the parable of the two houses in detail:

- (1) First of all, if we want to build our lives in a sound manner, we must not rely upon our own judgment nor follow our own way. We must 1) come to the Lord, 2) hear His sayings, and 3) do them. (Luke 6:47)
- (2) Just as it is possible to come to the Lord and yet not really hear what He is saying, it is also possible to come and hear, but go away without doing. (Luke 6:46)

"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror;

For once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was." (James 1:22-25).

- (3) A man who both HEARS and DOES the word is like a man who built his house by digging deep and removing everything between himself and the rock in order to assure a solid foundation. (Luke 6:48)

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He that comes .. hears .. and does

- (4) A house must be built upon a rock because storms WILL come; it is the nature of life. A house without a proper foundation will not be able to outlast the storms. Sooner or later it will fall. God uses the trials of this life to perfect us and make us ready for the life that is to come. We must all face the judgment seat of Christ; if we meet the Lord in these times of shaking now, there will be less useless and fleshly things to answer for then.

"See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less shall we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.

And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, 'Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.'

And this expression, 'Yet once more,' denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, IN ORDER THAT THOSE THINGS WHICH CANNOT BE SHAKEN MAY REMAIN.

Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe:

'FOR OUR GOD IS A CONSUMING FIRE.'" (Hebrews 12:25-29)

- (5) Every man is building something, and every man's building is someday going to be judged (I Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:10). If we want our building to be judged and accepted by the Lord then we must do two things.

- (a) Dig down deep and find the rock, not sand or ground. Sand is the

same material and substance as rock, only loose and disconnected. Many Christians are building their lives upon a loose arrangement of scriptures and experiences. This may stand for a while (just as sand at the seashore remains firm under foot until the waves begin to wash it out) but, sooner or later, it is going to begin to crumble. We cannot afford to be building our lives upon a lot of notions and head knowledge and a loose collection of "Christian ethics". We MUST have a personal encounter with Jesus Christ Himself. When we gather all our personal experiences together and relate them to God's Word on the basis of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, we have a solid foundation, not just a backyard full of sand.

- (b) Once we have found that Rock, we must begin to build a solid foundation ACCORDING TO GOD'S WORD. We must not attempt to construct our foundation with a loose collection of experiences, nor must we attempt to assemble it with "un-tempered mortar," i.e., with no real cohesion or order. (Isa. 28:9-13)
- (6) When buffeted by the storm, the house which had been built upon the rock remained firm. (Luke 6:48)

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He that comes ... hears ... and doesn't do...

- (7) Of course, the house which had been built without a foundation fell under the attack of the storm. (Luke 6:49)

## II. WHAT DID THE APOSTLES TEACH ABOUT OUR PERSONAL FOUNDATION?

Paul emphasizes the necessity of the foundation in I Cor. 3:10-15:

"According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it.

**FOR NO MAN CAN LAY A FOUNDATION OTHER THAN THE ONE WHICH IS LAID, WHICH IS JESUS CHRIST.**

Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire."

NOTE: There is a difference between the foundation, (our appropriation of the total redemptive work of Jesus Christ), and our works (that which we build upon our foundation). In the day of judgment, our foundation will not be tested, but our works will. If our works remain, we will receive our reward accordingly. This "reward" does not refer to our salvation, because that is a gift of grace by faith, and not of works (Eph. 1:7-9). If our works are burned up in the consuming fire of God's holy judgment, we ourselves will yet be saved, because we built upon the solid foundation of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Peter also wrote of the Rock which has become our foundation:

"And coming to Him as a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of God.

You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ...

This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, "The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very cornerstone;" and , "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense;" for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed." (1 Peter 2:4-8)

Paul again speaks of our foundation in his letter of the Church at Ephesus:

"So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone.

In whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit." (Eph. 2:19-22)

### **III. DOES THE BIBLE SPEAK MORE SPECIFICALLY ABOUT OUR FOUNDATION?**

Yes, the writer of Hebrews describes the foundation even further in Hebrews 5:11-14 and Hebrews 6:1,2.

"Concerning Him (Jesus) we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for some one to teach you the elementary principles (lit., "elements of the beginning") 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 a babe.

But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

THEREFORE, leaving the elementary teaching ( lit., the "word of the beginning") about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a FOUNDATION of;

1. Repentance from dead works,
2. Faith toward God,
3. Instructions about washings, (baptism)
4. Laying on of hands,
5. Resurrection of the dead,
6. Eternal judgment."

Remember, these are FOUNDATION stones of truth -- the milk of our salvation. Believers will never understand the meat of the word until they have comprehended these basic truths.