

Our Cornerstone

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

In Psalm 11:3, the writer asked, “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” I believe the answer is that they will live in defeat.

Storms and persecutions and trials are promised to those who live godly in Christ Jesus. Yet, many people are building lives upon foundations that shift. Jesus warned about this in Matthew 7:24-29. If our foundations are not right, they are sure to crumble and collapse.

Thank God, we are being built upon the Chief Cornerstone—Jesus Christ. He is our foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11), and what we build upon this foundation will be revealed in time. He is the One who was rejected by those trying to build a system and program of religion. The house that these builders were building rested on the changeable patterns of human obedience. Their programs were exalted above the Person of the Redeemer.

Everyone will face the Cornerstone. There is no other name under heaven whereby we can be

saved (Acts 4:12). There is salvation in no other. A spiritual structure that rests upon Christ is a structure that endures. It lasts and it stands.

As we will see in this booklet, God desires that all believers would be oriented toward this great tried and true Stone, this precious Rock. It upon this Rock that we must stand, and it is in the Rock that we are hid. Jesus Christ is our sure foundation. We live in Him and through Him, and by Him we are victorious in every way.

Chapter One

THE SURE FOUNDATION

“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

“Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.

“And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it” (Isaiah 28:16-18).

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

“Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

“Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is” (1 Corinthians 3:11-13).

Hundreds of tons of weight rest upon the cornerstone of any major building. For this reason, that stone must be sure and tried. A cornerstone is not laid in haste. The lines that are established by it must be right and plumb. If they are not, the whole structure will have problems.

Once the cornerstone is laid, the location of every other stone in the building is oriented to that very stone. Every calibration must be relative to the position of the cornerstone, or else the building will be crooked. It all starts with the foundation, and our foundation is Jesus Christ. All that we do must be oriented to Him; otherwise, we will find ourselves out of order.

Good Materials Give Good Results

Once the foundation of our faith has been laid down—that is, once we put Christ as our cornerstone—then we start putting together a house. The materials we use are very precious, as we see in 1 Corinthians 3:12. “Silver” speaks of redemption. “Gold” represents the incarnation and the divine attributes of Christ. “Precious stones” refer to the doctrines that we learn and live by categorically.

Of course, the choices are ours. We can, like some shady contractors do, use substandard materials. We can make wrong decisions and start building our spiritual building with “wood,”

which speaks to us of the works of men. “Hay” is worse than wood. Spiritually, it refers to out-of-control human emotions. Lastly, we may sometimes build with “stubble,” which is doctrine that we hear but do not apply to our lives. We hear it, but we do not actually have it worked into our hearts through meditation. It is the truth that we have not heard in meekness and humility, so it is lost to us.

The Purpose of a Foundation

Certain business or social organizations are labeled as foundations because they provide the support and direction needed for major efforts. Educational foundations have helped in many places that are have serious needs. They lead and direct and do the fund-raising necessary to keep things going.

The foundation of our lives as Christians is Christ—the Christ that is communicated to us through the whole Bible. Christ is not simply a dimension of Christianity. Christ *is* Christianity. Through the whole Bible, we see the Person of Jesus Christ expressed to us. From Genesis to Revelation, God shows us that it is His Son who is the one Redeemer and Savior of the world. The whole Word of God reveals this to us.

God has given us the foundation for healthy marriages.

God has given us the foundation for godly friendships.

God has given us the foundation for spiritually alive churches.

That foundation is Christ.

Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus Christ and His righteousness. He is our Rock.

Chapter Two

THE ROCK OF TRUTH

“Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people.

“And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

“And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.

“For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.

“And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

“And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.

“And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name

of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

“And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.

“And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock:

“And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:

“And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen” (Exodus 33:13-23).

People read this passage so quickly and I think they sometimes miss the tremendous meaning that we have here. Moses recognized his great need for the presence of God in his life. He also expressed the need we have to find grace in the sight of God. No man can see God and live. The Lord declared this. Yet, this is what God so much wants from us. He wants us to come before Him—to come before Him boldly whenever there is a need in our lives.

God then said to Moses, “Behold, there is a place by me.” How do we get to that place? That was Moses’ big question. “Sure there is a place by you, Lord. But the way? Where do I find it? How shall I make it?”

The answer? Stand upon the Rock.

Christ is the Solid Rock on which we stand. Remember, the old hymn says that all other ground is sinking sand. We can build our hope on nothing but Christ. God is telling Moses—and all of us as well—this great truth.

After we understand that we can stand upon nothing but Christ, then something even more beautiful happens. “My glory shall pass by, and I will put you in the Rock.” Jesus, the glory of God, passed by and walked through the human race as a human being. God became Man and took upon Himself the sins of the world. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. What a magnificent truth!

And why did God allow His glory to pass by? It was that we might be put into the Rock. Not only are we put into the Rock; we are also covered by His hand. God makes it so that we are hid with Christ in God.

Hid and Covered by the Hand of God

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

“For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:1-3).

Every single Christian is standing in the pure, unadulterated grace of God. This grace depends upon God's character and His character alone. It is not our character that is the issue. We are standing on the Rock in all that we do here on earth. We are cemented in the Rock by the grace and purpose of God. We are covered by Him forever and ever.

Nothing shall separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. No one can move me from the Rock. Nothing can take me out of His hand. Not even myself. I cannot remove myself from His hand.

"For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" (Romans 3:3).

The foundation of the Lord stands sure, the Bible tells us this in 2 Timothy 2:19.

"And [Moses] hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.

"And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.

"And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in

goodness and truth" (Exodus 34:4-6).

The glory of God reveals His graciousness, His longsuffering, His forbearance. We are hid with the blood of Christ. The wounded hands of Jesus hold us, and they hold us tight.

Chapter Three

THE TRIED AND TRUE STONE

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

“And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

“And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

“And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

“For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7:24-29).

When Jesus spoke to people, the effect on them was so different. He was an astonishing

speaker. His words carried with them something so far beyond anything that had ever been spoken before. He spoke with the authority of heaven. The Father gave Him words of power and words of life. The Spirit made sure those words hit home. The result was and is that His words moved people.

Wise people build their spiritual houses upon the Rock. The wisdom of God and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ keep us in any storm. At the center of any hurricane is the eye. It is a place of very low pressure and clear skies. Look at the satellite pictures of these big storms sometime. You can see a very defined, open circle. All around that circle—called the eye of the storm—is lightning and thunder and wind and rain. Things on the earth are being battered and blown away. But there in the center, the pressure is low and the sky is clear.

“And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

“And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders

of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

“Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel” (Exodus 17:3-6).

The Rock was there for Israel all the way through the wilderness. It was there for them every time they were thirsty. It was a sure place. What came out of it was pure.

The first time Israel needed water, Moses was told to strike the rock. He did—in the plain presence of all the elders of Israel—and the water flowed right out. The next time, Moses was commanded by God to simply speak to the rock. Instead, Moses struck the rock, *twice*. God did supply the water, but Moses was prevented from crossing into the Promised Land with the nation of Israel because of his disobedience.

That may seem a harsh penalty to you, but God cannot allow His word to be trifled with. He told Moses to *speak* to the rock. There’s a great picture for us. Jesus Christ was smitten once, for all men. His death on the Cross marked the beating and punishment that all sinners deserved. But the Lord absorbed that penalty. He only did it once. We cannot crucify Christ afresh. It will never happen again. When Moses struck

the rock at the second incident, God could not let him get away with it—and He will not let people get away with trying to make it seem as if Christ has to die all over again.

The Cornerstone Took the Pain

Jesus Christ was a tried Stone. He lived the perfect life and then gave it up for us all. Now He is our Cornerstone. Once beaten, once buried, now risen, and now ascended. Heaven is where He lives now, and we live with Him and in Him.

People may hold your sins against you. They are beating the stone again. But the tried stone is a sure stone. It is set and it cannot be moved.

Jesus was tried as He grew up in Nazareth. When He came to preach the Gospel in his hometown, no one listened and very few received the healing that He could have brought there.

He was arrested at Gethsemane. He was tried three times, and all of the proceedings were unlawful. A thick tangle of long thorns was pounded down upon His head. He was so wounded for our transgressions and so beaten for our iniquity. It happened. It had to happen. Someone had to pay for the sins of the world, and Jesus Christ was determined to do it.

The Foundation of the Lord is sure. On that tree, He was unrecognizable. This man of sor-

rows became such a precious Stone. Now the precious love of God permeates and penetrates every part of us. We live in total victory because of our Cornerstone.

In Exodus 17, Israel was fighting a great battle. As long as Moses kept his hands held up, Israel was in control of the war. The day wore on and so did the fight. Moses grew weary and had difficulty holding up his arms, so Aaron and Hur moved a stone under him and helped hold up his hands. That is the way the Body of Christ works. People get tired. They struggle. They need help. What do we give them? We sit them down on the Rock. We move the Cornerstone under them and we hold up their hands. In this kind of life, we all win.

CONCLUSION

First Corinthians 10:4 says that we all drink the same spiritual drink that the people Israel drank from. We drink from Christ, the fountain of living water. This fountain never shall run dry. It lives and flows in us.

When we have the right foundation, we have categorical truth and categorical thinking. Our revivals are Word of God revivals. We are not into the emotional stuff, the hay that lights up and then dies out in a moment.

We are in the Rock, and the Word is bubbling, bubbling, bubbling in our souls. It flows and it goes with us into all the world.

Thank God for Jesus' holy life. Thank God for His patience and grace and longsuffering. Thank God for His resurrection power. This is ours, and ours forever. Our God is a sure thing—the Rock, tried and true. Let us stay on our foundation. Let's hide ourselves in His love.

God Really Cares For You

Jesus loves you deeply. However, the fact that all have sinned separates us from God (*Romans 3:23; 6:23*). Still, God cares for you and He provides a way to share His love with you.

Jesus Christ's love for man was so great that He came and died on the cross for all the sins of mankind. He shed His blood for you so you can be forgiven and have eternal life.

The only thing He requires of you is to come to Him in simple faith trusting His character and love for you, and accepting Him as your Savior. "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (*Acts 2:21*).

Simply pray, "Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I receive you as my personal Savior. Thank you for loving me so much that you died for me so I can have eternal life with you. Amen."

He promises that He will never stop loving you and that He will never leave nor forsake you (*Hebrews 13:5*). Develop your relationship with Him by reading the Bible, praying, and attending a good Bible-believing church.

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