

FOUNDATIONS

What the Pastor of Hebrews expected every believer to know.

1.28.24

Hebrews 6:1–3 (CSB)

6 Therefore, let us leave the elementary teaching about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works, faith in God, ²teaching about ritual washings, laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. ³And we will do this if God permits.

Intro: When foundations begin to crumble, it gets our attention!

A. Foundations are important.

1. They are important for the structural integrity of our homes
2. When our feet, legs, and back are strong, we say we have a strong foundation.
3. Foundations are what we build upon.
4. The purpose of a foundation is so the BUILDING might last.
5. If we don't lay the foundations, what we build will not stand.

B. The Pastor of Hebrews understands the value and the purpose of foundational, elementary things.

1. When things go wrong, we say we need to go back to the basics.
2. Psalm 11:3 says, "When the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

C. For many of us in the room, these elementary teachings don't feel elementary.

1. We've heard about faith, and repentance, and baptism, but we don't know really know how they work.

2. It's like building a house:

a. Many of us trust and hope that the contractor we hired UNDERSTANDS the basics of building.

b. But when we are doing the work ourselves, we have to understand for ourselves.

D. The next few weeks leading up to Easter, I want to share with us some of these elementary teachings about Christ.

1. Before you check out, please note that even for the most mature, some of this will be new.

2. By addressing these fundamental doctrines of Christ, I'm believing for maturity among all of the saints.

Repentance from dead works

Faith in God

Ritual Washings

Laying on of hands

Resurrection of the dead and Eternal Judgment

1. Repentance from Dead Works.

A. What are dead works?

1. Acts that lead to death and efforts that try to save ourselves.

2. The eternal reality is that you can't save yourself.

B. We live in a world that is trying to create immortality APART from God.

1. Scientific interventions, mystical religions, and now AI offer the false promise of life apart from God.

2. One of the newest trends is the new movement to record a loved one's voice and then, after death, use AI to allow us to communicate with our loved ones.

- a. Can you imagine asking grandma questions, and she does?
- b. Can you imagine the falsehood and pain this could cause?

C. **Life begins at repentance.**

- 1. The Work of the Holy Spirit is to draw people to Jesus.
- 2. All of us were dead in our trespasses and sin.
 - a. All of us had sinned.
 - b. All of us needed a Savior.
 - c. Some of us don't realize how lost and dead we really are.

D. Repentance also means to say the same thing about our sin that God does.

- 1. James 5:16 tells us to "confess your sins."
- 2. To confess means to say the same thing about our sin that God says.
 - a. You aren't confessing a mistake.
 - b. You aren't admitting that you did wrong.
 - c. You are saying that you have sinned against God and against another person or yourself.
- 3. **Repentance requires us to be truthful and specific.**

E. **Some of us in the room need to tell the truth.**

- 1. We need to confess and repent for our sins.
- 2. We need to forgive someone, ask forgiveness of someone, and we need to be specific.

F. Part of maturity is telling the truth.

- 1. One of Jesus' main sermon themes was repentance.

2. He went out preaching, "repent for the Kingdom is at hand."
Matt. 4:17
3. We enter the Kingdom through repentance.
4. By confessing our sinfulness and Jesus' sinlessness.
5. By admitting that we cannot save ourselves and accepting Jesus as King and redeemer.

2. Repentance that leads to Faith in God and Toward God.

A. Repentance is only part of the equation.

2 Corinthians 7:10 (CSB) ¹⁰For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, but worldly grief produces death.

1. We can repent and not believe.
2. We can express remorse and not be transformed.
3. We can even be a person of faith and misplace that faith in the wrong arena.

B. **American culture is a faith culture.**

1. We love people of great faith, as long as that faith is not in Jesus.
2. We celebrate mystics who chase supernatural knowledge.
3. We have tens of thousands of people who believe, through their rituals in front of a TV, a kicker won't miss an extra-point.
4. We write biographies and consume YOUTUBE channels of great visionaries who had some sort of faith.

C. Misplaced faith does not save.

1. Faith always has a destination.
2. It can be in:
 - a. Ourselves.
 - b. Politics

- c. Stock-market
- d. A loved one.

3. **But only faith placed in Jesus saves!**

Romans 5:5 (CSB)

⁵This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

D. The pastor of Hebrews defined faith:

Hebrews 11:1 (CSB) Now faith is the reality of what is hoped for, the proof of what is not seen.

Hebrews 11:1 (ESV) Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1 (KJV) ¹ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

1. By these definitions, faith is a noun.
 - a. Faith is more than a feeling.
 - b. Faith is a reality, a proof, a substance, an evidence.
2. Your faith, trust, and hope are very real things.
 - a. Misplaced faith kills.
 - b. Outside of connection with Jesus, all acts lead to death.

3. How do we lay a foundation of repentance and faith in God?

This is anecdotal, but using the biblical image of foundation, I suggest 4 things:

- #1. Make sure you are building in the right spot.
 - A. I love history, and I read history for fun.
 1. But every person I have ever studied has disappointed me.

2. I read an article the other day about an incident early in Abraham Lincoln's presidency that resulted in the mass hanging of 38 Sioux warriors.

3. To be honest, I was troubled by this.

4. As I began to think about all of history's great people, George Washington, Martin Luther and Martin Luther King Jr, or Abraham Lincoln...I found no perfect people.

5. Has there been no great man?

B. The Answer:

1. All have sinned.

2. All need repentance.

3. All must be changed and transformed.

4. All need forgiveness, grace, and mercy.

5. This is why Jesus, the perfect, sinless Son of God came.

C. Are you building your life in the elementary teachings about Christ?

1. Is it to Him you have repented and turned to?

2. In what ways are you placing your faith in Him?

#2. Prepare the ground

A. Before you pour a foundation, you have to prepare the ground.

1. This part is costly but very important.

2. If you build on the wrong stuff, you have no integrity.

B. We prepare the ground of our hearts in several ways:

1. Read Scripture.

a. It is God's Word that exposes our sin and true nature.

b. It is God's Word that provides a conduit for our life to be changed and transformed.

c. We have to expose our life to the correction of Scripture.

2. Worship turns our attention from ourselves toward God.

3. Prayer, Fasting, Solitude, and Silence are all tools used to prepare our heart for the work of God in our lives.

4. Of course, we never stop preparing our hearts for what God is saying and doing in us.

#3. Have the right tools.

A. Thankfully, God has not left us to our own devices.

1. Through Scripture, prayer, worship, and the gifts of the Spirit, God changes and transforms us.

2. God is ACTIVE in this work.

3. We are not left on our own to figure it out.

4. But He Transforms us according to His image.

B. Zechariah 12:1 speaks of the Lord who stretched out the heavens, laid the foundation of the earth, and formed the spirit of man within him.

1. You do not save yourself by your "dead works".

2. We are saved by God's work in us.

3. Thankfully, as we expose ourselves to the working of the Lord, He transforms us.

#4. Dig deep.

A. "What we reveal, we allow to be healed."

1. The work the Holy Spirit wants to do in your life is deep, transformational, work.

2. This is not surface work.

3. The surface may look good but is not suitable for structural integrity.

B. You don't ask a landscaper to lay a foundation.

1. When it comes to laying a strong, spiritual foundation, we don't want to deal only with what is on the surface.

2. We want to be transformed in our innermost being.

C. The only one who can do that is Jesus.

Close: Jesus is our firm foundation.

A. This week, I came across a powerful quote.

1. The context was about the search of humans, modern and ancient, to find "hidden" knowledge through drugs, demonic activity, and the like.

2. The writers said this:

3. You can't rely on something to save you if all they know is the way into the grave.

4. What you need is someone who can show the fruit of his labor and come back out of the grave glorified; and there is only one who has done that, the God-man Jesus Christ.

B. This morning, as we worship and respond, may we all take the next step in ensuring Jesus is the foundation of our life.

1. A great way to do that this morning is to ask God, "What is my next step?"

2. What is one area where I need more faith, love, grace, or hope?

3. Then, worship.