

On Christ The Solid Rock

Last Sunday the message was titled Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. We said then that Revelation and Redemption both come through Jesus Christ our Lord. We know God because he has revealed himself to us ultimately and supremely through Jesus Christ our Lord. We have been redeemed through the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord. Salvation comes only through Jesus. Our access to God the Father comes through Jesus Christ our Lord. God's grace comes to us through Jesus Christ. Every good gift comes to us from the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit.

This morning we change the preposition. Rather than **Through Jesus Christ our Lord**, our focus today is **On Jesus Christ our Lord**. We build our life on Jesus Christ, on His saving grace, his truth, his promise. He is the sure foundation upon which we build our lives, the solid rock upon which we stand.

Jesus told the story about the wise and foolish builders in Luke 6. Jesus compared the person who hears his word and puts them into practice to **“a man...dug down 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.” Luke 6:48** The foolish man built his house on the ground without a foundation under it and when the stream rose the house fell. The people of first century Israel knew to build on a solid foundation. In a few weeks we will be in Israel, looking at buildings that have withstood the storms for more than 2000 years. They built upon the rock! **The stability of a building depends on a solid foundation and so does the stability of our lives.**

What are you building your life upon? Some people build on money, thinking money will buy security and happiness. Some build their lives on possessions, acquiring more stuff, more toys. You can build your life on popularity, fame, celebrity, believing the most important thing in life is to be liked, accepted, desired. Some build their life on athletic prowess or on their looks, their beauty, their sex appeal. Some build their life on science, building only on what they believe to be verifiable. Some build their life on drugs, sex, rock and roll, the list can go on and on. Notice all of these things are temporary. Time and storms destroy all of these things. Beauty doesn't last. Time takes care of that. Money can be gone over night, athletic prowess disappears over time, skill diminishes, science evolves and changes. Nothing on the list is eternal. Doesn't it make sense to build your life on a sure foundation? Build your life on a

foundation that is eternal, on a foundation that will last for eternity. I suggest you build your life on Jesus Christ. What does that mean?

First of all, recognize, **Jesus is the only sure foundation.** “On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand” the songwriter said. Everything else is shifting, changing. Malachi 3:6 says the Lord does not change. The bible declares, **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Hebrews 13:8** He is the same, eternally faithful, eternally good, eternally righteous and truthful, just and holy. He is morally pure, without fault or sin. He lived a sinless life, died as the atoning sacrifice for our sins, giving his life for us while we were still sinners. He rose from the dead, conquering death and ascended to the right hand of God the father where he reigns as the One mediator and intercessor for us. He alone is trustworthy and true. He is the only eternal, unchanging foundation upon which we can build our lives. Most importantly, he is the only means of salvation for us. After the resurrection of Jesus, Peter was arrested and brought before the Jewish leaders. In their presence Peter testified of the death and resurrection of Jesus and then said, **“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4:12.** He is the only sure foundation!

How can I be so sure? Because the bible says so and I believe the bible to be the infallible Word of God. How can I be sure the bible is true? Hundreds of prophecies fulfilled. Archeological evidence that continues to verify the accuracy of the bible. 66 different documents written by 40 different people over 1500 years in different countries in at least three different languages and yet it is a consistent, harmonious account of how God is calling us back to a relationship with Himself. The accuracy of the manuscripts we have, some dating back more than 2,000 years, the eyewitness testimony of the disciples and more than 500 people at one time who saw the risen Lord and the fact that Jesus said this word was true and reliable, not to mention the millions of changed lives. So I believe the bible to be God’s word and God’s word says Jesus is the only means to salvation. Only Jesus can save us and for me that means that he is the only sure foundation.

Both Peter and Paul quote from the book of Isaiah, applying the words to Jesus when God said, **“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.” Isaiah 28:16.** Jesus is the cornerstone, the sure foundation. Trust in him and you will never be dismayed.

The bible says, **“For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 3:11** In talking about Jesus as our foundation, Paul is talking about his truth, his teaching, our belief in his atoning death and miraculous resurrection from the dead. To build our life on Christ alone is to not only trust in his saving work, but to obey his word, his teaching. In the parable of the wise and foolish builders that we mentioned earlier, Jesus said the wise man was the one who heard his teaching and put it into practice. The foolish builder heard but ignored the warnings and teachings of Jesus. The key is a life of obedience. **The way to build your life on Jesus Christ is to believe his word and obey!** It’s never too late to start! Second, to build on Jesus as your foundation you need to...

Rest on his finished work of salvation. We made the point last Sunday that according to the writer of Hebrews, when Jesus finished his work of offering himself as the atoning sacrifice for our sins, he sat down at the Father’s right hand. Hebrews makes the point that the work of redemption is complete from God’s standpoint. Jesus has provided the sacrifice and he now rests from his work of redemption. Now it’s up to us. We repent of our sins, receive Christ as our Savior and Lord and when we do, we rest on him and his saving grace. That means we depend totally and completely upon Jesus and his righteousness for our salvation. We aren’t saved by our effort or by our works but by our faith in and upon Jesus!

I’ve tried for the past 32 years as your pastor to lift up Jesus and to faithfully proclaim that we are saved by grace. I saw too much of a “works-based” salvation growing up. Dear saints of God trying to earn God’s grace and forgiveness by their effort, frightened that they hadn’t done enough to be saved, afraid they would miss heaven because they just hadn’t been good enough. I came to realize the word gospel means good news and the good news is that we have been saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. Hear the word of the Lord. **“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9** Saved by grace, not by works! Hear it again. **“But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying.” Titus**

3:4-9 How are you saved? By his mercy. How are you justified? By his grace! Rest in his unfailing grace!

John Stott tells the story of John Paton, a Scottish missionary in the 1800's. He went as a Presbyterian missionary to the New Hebrides, an island chain in the South Pacific now known as Vanuatu. Three months after arriving on the island of Tanna his young wife died followed by their five week old son. Let me quote from Stott's account. "For three more years he labored alone among the hostile Tannese, ignoring their threats and seeking to make Jesus Christ known to them, before escaping with his life and later spending fifteen years on the island of Aniwa. It is said that he was working one day in his home at the translation of John's gospel. He was puzzling over the evangelist's favorite expression, to believe in or trust in Jesus Christ, which occurs first in the Gospel's twelfth verse. How could he translate it? The islanders were cannibals. Nobody trusted anybody else. There was no word for 'trust' in their language. His native servant came in. 'What am I doing?' he asked. The man replied that he was sitting at his desk. Paton then raised both his feet off the floor and sat back on his chair. 'What am I doing now?' In reply the servant used a verb which means 'to lean your whole weight upon' and this is the expression Paton used throughout the Gospel to translate 'to believe in.'"

The Roman jailer in Acts 16 asked Paul and Silas "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Their answer was to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ or the literal translation reads, "believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved." It is the same truth for us. Believe on Jesus, that he died for you and he rose again and he offers forgiveness and saving grace to all that will believe on him. Believe on him. Lean your whole weight upon him. Surrender to him and trust him with everything, with your whole life, your future, your all. Ask him to save you and then believe on Him. Rest your life, your hope, your salvation, your eternal destiny on the finished work of Christ, the sure foundation, the solid rock!

Build on the only sure foundation, Jesus. Rest on the finished work of Jesus. The third thing I want to mention is to **Rely On the Promises of Jesus**. We get all kinds of mixed signals and fake news in the world today. Everyone spins the truth with some kind of slant or bias. What can you believe? On what can you rely? You can rely on the word of God. We used to sing a song years ago, "Standing On The Promises of God." Standing on the promises of Christ My King, through eternal ages let his praises ring... How are we going to not only survive but thrive in the day in which we live? We are going to build our life on Jesus and his teaching,

living in obedience to him. We are going to rest on his saving grace and we are going to rely on his promises!

Jesus said, **“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”** **Matthew 24:35** There is a certainty about Christ and his promises to us. I may not understand the timing of all things, and I grant you there is mystery since his ways are above my ways and his thoughts are above my thoughts, not everything has turned out as I prayed or wished, but there is a peace and confidence that comes as we rest in and rely upon him and his promises.

The Psalmist declared, **“Forever, O Lord, your word is settled in heaven.”** **Psalm 119:89** It’s settled. He has promised and he will bring it to pass. The bible declares **“God is not a man that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?”** **Numbers 23:19** Paul writes of Jesus, **“For all the promises of God find their ‘Yes’ in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our ‘Amen’ to God for his glory.”** **2 Corinthians 1:20**

The promises of God find their “yes”, their fulfillment, their completeness in Jesus. He has promised and more than that, he has pledged himself to us, his people, that he will never leave us nor forsake us. Hebrews 7:25 says Jesus lives to intercede for us so he is able to save us completely. He will deliver us. He will keep his word. Some of you are going through the worst time in your life. How are you going to make it? What can you rely on? You’ve got a firm foundation. If Jesus is the Savior and Lord of your life, the wind and the flood may come against you, but it cannot shake you or move you. Stand on the Rock! Brace yourself in the wind and rest on his mercy and his grace. Rely on his promise, on his word. Trust and obey!

Sickness, disease, death and disappointment, hardship, trouble and trials. I get it. But here is our confession, our confidence. Underneath us, in the midst of the storm, is Christ the sure foundation. **On Christ the Solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand!** Edward Mote the songwriter penned these words: “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus name. When darkness veils his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace. In every high and stormy gale my anchor holds within the veil. His oath his covenant his blood support me in the whelming flood. When all around my soul gives way, he then is all my hope and stay. On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand, all other ground is sinking sand!”

