



The New Testament Church

The Foundation of the Church

I. FOUNDED UPON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

A. The Laying of the Foundation

1. The church is likened to a building.
 - a. God has always desired to dwell in the midst of His people.
 - (1) Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:7-8)
 - (2) Enoch (Genesis 5:22-24)
 - (3) Noah and the ark (Genesis 7:1)
 - (4) The children of Israel (Exodus 15:16-17; Exodus 29:45-46)
 - (5) The New Testament (Matthew 18:20)
 - (6) The churches (Revelation 1:10-15)
 - b. God's presence today is experienced in a two-fold manner.
 - (1) Each New Testament believer is the dwelling place of the Lord. In fact, if the Spirit of God does not indwell an individual, it is an indication that the individual is unsaved (Romans 8:9).
 - a) This was promised during Christ's ministry (John 14:17).
 - b) It was accomplished in the church (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
 - (2) Additionally, the church is identified as God's dwelling place.
 - a) This was promised during Christ's ministry (Matthew 18:20).
 - b) This was confirmed in the churches.
 - i) Ye are God's building (1 Corinthians 3:9).
 - ii) Ye are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).
 - iii) Ye are builded together for an habitation of God (Ephesians 2:20-22).
 - iv) Ye are built up a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5).
 2. Jesus Christ is the foundation.
 - a. He offered Himself to the Jewish people (John 1:11).
 - b. The Jewish builders rejected Him (Acts 4:10-11).
 - c. He became the foundation for the New Testament church (1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:19-22).
 3. Jesus Christ owns the church.
 - a. He said He would build His church (Matthew 16:18).
 - b. He purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28).

B. Building upon the Foundation

1. We are likened to builders.
 - a. Paul was a wise masterbuilder (1 Corinthians 3:10).
 - (1) Paul laid the foundation. Note: Christ was the foundation, but the mysteries given to Paul were as well in a different sense.
 - (2) After Paul, others were building and would build in the future.



- b. Paul did not want to build on another man's foundation (Romans 15:20). Note: This passage actually confirms the truth taught above that the word *foundation* can be used in different manners and that context determines the meaning.
- 2. We must take heed how we build.
 - a. Others built before us (1 Corinthians 3:10).
 - b. The foundation is predetermined (1 Corinthians 3:11). Note: This truth would include the foundation of Christ and of the truths set forth by the apostles.
 - c. There are good and bad building materials (1 Corinthians 3:12).
 - (1) The good—gold, silver, precious stones
 - (2) The bad—wood, hay, stubble
 - d. There is accountability for the work (1 Corinthians 3:13-15).
 - (1) The work will be manifest (1 Corinthians 3:13).
 - (2) Abiding work will be rewarded (1 Corinthians 3:14).
 - (3) Perishing work will suffer loss (1 Corinthians 3:15).

C. Departure from the Foundation

- 1. A gradual departure
 - a. Churches do not depart from the foundation overnight.
 - b. Consider the church at Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22).
 - (1) The Lord was still willing to make an appeal.
 - (2) For the most part the Lord had been rejected.
 - (3) The Lord was interested in fellowshipping with individuals.
- 2. A complete departure
 - a. Some churches continue down the path of apostasy until they completely depart from the foundation.
 - b. If the people were saved, they are still saved.
 - c. The Lord, however, can remove the candlestick (Revelation 2:5).

II. BUILT ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

A. The Source of the Word of God

- 1. Men who knew the Lord
 - a. John (1 John 1:1-3)
 - b. Peter (2 Peter 1:16-18)
 - c. Paul (Galatians 1:10-17)
- 2. From heaven (Psalm 119:89)
- 3. The words of God
 - a. Words which the Holy Ghost teacheth (1 Corinthians 2:13)
 - b. The words of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

B. The Authority of the Word of God

- 1. Based on the authority of the Author (Mark 1:22, 27; Luke 4:36)



2. Based on its ability to last (Matthew 24:35)
3. Based on its ability to survive attacks (Genesis 3:1)

C. The Power of the Word of God

1. The power to enlighten (Psalm 119:130)
 - a. Men are blinded by Satan (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).
 - b. The only resource we have to break through the scales on the eyes of men is the written word of God. The entrance of God's words will give light.
2. The power to discern (Hebrews 4:12-13)
 - a. The reception of light is not good enough for salvation. Men can receive some light, but then they must act upon it.
 - b. We cannot discern the heart of men to see if true faith is working.
 - c. Only the Bible can discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.
3. The power to accomplish (Isaiah 55:11)
 - a. Right thoughts and intents is still not enough to save a man. Even if we were there to witness a person come to this point, we still have no power to take him/her to the next step.
 - b. Once the thoughts and intents of the heart are in line with the word of God, the Bible is able to work in the heart to accomplish the Lord's will.
4. The power to save (Romans 1:16; James 1:21)
 - a. The Bible begins to work in a man's heart, but must also complete this work in the salvation of the soul.
 - b. No matter what methods we may use, we do not have the power to save a soul. We must have the word of God for this to occur.
5. The power to perfect (2 Timothy 3:15-17)
 - a. Salvation will place a person in the body of Christ, but salvation does not automatically make the person mature in the Lord's will and work.
 - b. The Bible also has the power to take a man from a newborn babe in Christ to a perfect man. Note: The biblical meaning of the word *perfect* is not *sinless*.
6. The power to judge (John 12:48)
 - a. The Bible begins the process by giving light.
 - b. The Bible will end the process by judging.

D. The Influence of the Word of God

1. On doctrine
2. On practice
3. Note: There are only three possible categories for all practices, teachings, or convictions.
 - a. Scriptural
 - b. Unscriptural
 - c. Nonscriptural